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MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY

BY THE REV.
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POPULAR IMPEACHMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY

'Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?'
—S. Luke vi. 46.

'The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you.'—Romans ii. 24.

'What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?'—Romans iii. 3.

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'So is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.'—1 S. Peter ii. 15.

I

POPULAR IMPEACHMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY

That there is at present a widespread alienation from the Christian Faith can hardly be denied. Sometimes by violent invective, sometimes by quiet assumption, the conclusion is conveyed that Christianity is obsolete. Whatever benefits it may have conferred in rude, unenlightened ages, it is now outgrown, it is not in keeping with the science and discovery of modern times. 'The good Lord Jesus has had His day,'[1] is murmured in pitying condescension towards those who still suffer themselves to be deceived by the antiquated superstition. The statements in which our forefathers embodied the relations

[1] Tennyson, *In the Children's Hospital.*

between God and man are no longer, except by a very few, considered adequate; and there is everywhere a demand that those statements should be recast. Is not all this an irresistible proof that the beliefs of the Church have been abandoned, that the old notions of the Divine care, the spiritual world, the everlasting life, cannot be maintained, must be relegated to the realm of imagination? The blessings with which Christianity is commonly credited spring from other sources: the evils with which society is infected are its result, direct or indirect.

I

Such accusations, it may occur to us, cannot be made seriously: they bear their refutation in the very making; they cannot be propounded with any expectation of being accepted. This may seem self-evident to us: it is not self-evident to multitudes of eager,

earnest men. The accusations are persistently made by vigorous writers and impassioned speakers, and are received as incontrovertible propositions. However astonishing, however painful, it may be for us to hear, it is well that we should know, what, in largely circulated books and periodicals, and in mass meetings of the people, is said about the Faith which we profess, and about us who profess it.

Listen to some of the terms in which Christianity is impeached.

'I undertake,' says Mr. Winwood Reade, 'I undertake to show that the destruction of Christianity is essential to the interests of civilisation; and also that man will never attain his full powers as a moral being, until he has ceased to believe in a personal God, and in the immortality of the soul. Christianity must be destroyed.' [1]

'The hostile evidence,' says Mr. Philip

[1] *The Martyrdom of Man.*

Vivian, 'appears to be overwhelming. Christianity cannot be true. Provided that we see things as they really are, and not as we wish them to be, we cannot but come to this conclusion. We cannot get away from facts. Modern knowledge forces us to admit that the Christian Faith cannot be true.' [1]

'I want,' exclaims Mr. Vivian Carey, who has apparently, like Lord Herbert of Cherbury, received a revelation to prove that no revelation has been given, 'I want to destroy the fetich of centuries and to instil in its place a life of duty, and of faith in God and man, and I believe there is a power that has impelled me to attempt this task. . . . A system that has produced such results must be essentially bad. . . . It will not be difficult to create a faith and a religion that will serve the needs of humanity, where Christianity has so deplorably failed.' [2]

[1] *The Churches and Modern Thought.*

[2] *Parsons and Pagans.*

'If Christianity,' argues Mr. Charles Watts, 'were potent for good, that good would have been displayed ere now. . . . The ties of domestic affection, the bonds of the social compact, the political relations of rulers and ruled, all have surrendered themselves to its influence. Yet with all these advantages, it has proved unable to keep pace with a progressive civilisation.' [1]

'In a really humane and civilised nation,' Mr. Robert Blatchford contends, 'there should be and need be no such thing as Ignorance, Crime, Idleness, War, Slavery, Hate, Envy, Pride, Greed, Gluttony, Vice. But this is not a humane and civilised nation, and never will be while it accepts Christianity as its religion. These are my reasons for opposing Christianity.' [2] 'Christianity,' he iterates and reiterates, 'is not true.' [3]

'Onward, ye children of the new Faith!'

[1] *Secularists' Manual.* [2] *God and my Neighbour.*
[3] *Ibid.*

exultantly cries Mr. Moncure D. Conway. 'The sun of Christendom hastes to its setting, but the hope never sets of those who know that the sunset here is a sunrise there!' [1]

Such is the manner in which the downfall of Christianity is now proclaimed. And the impression is prevalent that, though in all ages Christianity has been the object of doubt and of scorn, yet never has it been rejected with such intensity of hatred as now, never have keen criticism and deep earnestness, wide learning and shrewd mother-wit been so combined in the attack. It is not merely the reckless, the dissolute, the frivolous who turn away from its reproofs, seeking excuses for their self-indulgence, but it is the thoughtful, the austere, the high-principled, the reverent, the unselfish, who are engaged in a crusade against all that we, as Christians, hold dear. 'To the old spirit of mockery, coarse or refined, to the old wrangle of argument,

[1] *Earthward Pilgrimage.*

also coarse or refined, has succeeded the spirit of grave, measured, determined negation.'[1] Men whose integrity and elevation of character are beyond suspicion, take their places among the rebels against the authority of Christ. They are fighting, they assert, not for the removal of a check to their vices, but for the introduction of a nobler ideal. In the demolition of Christianity, in the sweeping away of every vestige of religious belief, religious custom, religious hope, they imagine themselves to be conferring inestimable benefits upon mankind. Christianity, in their view, is the product of delusion and the buttress of all social ills.

II

The contrast which so many are drawing between the present and the past is not a little exaggerated. There have been few periods in which Christianity has not been the

[1] Dean Church, *Pascal and other Sermons*, p. 348.

object of animadversion and attack, in which its speedy downfall has not been confidently predicted. It was two hundred years ago that Dean Swift wrote *An Argument to prove that the Abolishing of Christianity in England may, as things now stand, be attended with some Inconveniences, and perhaps not produce those many good effects proposed thereby*': the Dean, with scathing sarcasm, ridiculing at once the conventional customs by which Christianity was misrepresented, and the supercilious ignorance which assumed that it was extinct.[1] It was about a quarter of a century later that Bishop Butler, in the advertisement to his *Analogy of Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature*, stated, 'It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry, but that it is now, at length, discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if,

[1] Appendix I.

in the present age, this were an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were, by way of reprisals for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world.' And the Bishop drily gave as the aim of the *Analogy*: 'Thus much, at least, will be here found, not taken for granted but proved, that any reasonable man who will thoroughly consider the matter, may be as much assured as he is of his own being, that it is not, however, so clear a case that there is nothing in it.'

The assumption that Christianity is a thing of the past can hardly be more prevalent now than it was then; and the groundlessness of the assumption then may lead to the conclusion that the assumption is equally groundless now. Since the days of Butler or of Swift, the progress of Christianity has not ceased: its developments of thought and

life have been among the most remarkable in its whole career. The exultation over its decay in the twentieth century may possibly be found as premature and as vain as the exultation over its decay in the eighteenth century, or in any of the centuries which have gone before.

III

The most popular impeachments of Christianity are mainly these.

It is a mass of false and superstitious beliefs long exploded. It is the opponent of progress and inquiry, the discoveries of science having been made in direct defiance of its teaching and its influence.

It is the champion of oppression and tyranny. It aims at keeping the poor in ignorance and destitution. It prostrates itself before the rich and seeks the patronage of the great.

It so insists on people being absorbed in

the thought of heaven that it practically precludes them from doing any good on earth.

It is a system of selfishness, inculcating the dogma that no one need care for anything except the salvation of his own soul.[1]

It is the foster-mother of all the evil and misery by which society is distressed. Dishonesty, cruelty, slavery, war, persecution, avarice, drunkenness, vice, would seem to be its natural fruits.

> 'How calm and sweet the victories of life,'

shrieked Shelley in one of his early poems.

> 'How terrorless the triumph of the grave . . .
> . . . but for thy aid
> Religion! but for thee, prolific fiend,
> Who peoplest earth with demons, hell with men,
> And heaven with slaves!
> Thou taintest all thou look'st upon!'[2]

What shall we say to these accusations? Christians have been credulous and superstitious, have argued and acted as if only in

[1] Appendix II.

[2] *Queen Mab.*

the abnormal and exceptional could the Divine Presence be found, as if God were a hard Taskmaster and capricious Tyrant. They have resisted progress and inquiry, blindly refusing to see the light which was streaming upon them. They have unquestionably been guilty of miserable pride towards inferiors in wealth or in station, and guilty of miserable sycophancy towards the rich and the powerful. Christians have too frequently neglected the material well-being of the community, have suffered disgraceful outward conditions to remain without protest, have not striven to shed abroad happiness and brightness in squalid and wretched lives. Christians have been art and part in fostering such conditions as wrung from compassionate and indignant hearts the *Song of the Shirt* and the *Cry of the Children.* Christians have imagined that correctness of belief would make up for falseness of heart, and loudness of profession for depravity of

practice. Christians have supposed that in religion all that has to be striven for is the salvation of one's own soul, have even represented the joy of the redeemed as heightened by a contemplation of the torments of the lost. Christians must bear the responsibility of much of the abounding vice which they have not earnestly tried to combat where it already exists, and which, in various forms, they have introduced into regions where it was unknown before. Lawlessness and degradation in the slums, fraud and dishonesty in trade, gross revelations in the fashionable world; bigotry, slander, scandals in the ecclesiastical world; plots, wars, treacheries, assassinations, in the political world: these things ought not so to be. The fiercest denunciations, the most withering satires, which unbelievers have employed, do not exceed in intensity of condemnation the judgment which Christian preachers and Christian writers have pronounced.[1]

[1] Hans Faber, *Das Christentum der Zukunft.*

In all ages of the Church the most powerful weapon against Christianity has been the example of Christians. The Faith which they nominally hold has been judged by the lives which they actually lead.[1] 'Christianity,' said a bishop of the eighteenth century, 'would perhaps be the last religion a wise man would choose, if he were guided by the lives of those who profess it.'[2] But is this to admit that the hope of the world lies in renouncing Christianity? that in confining ourselves to the seen and the temporal, we shall best elevate mankind? that the prospect of annihilation and the absence of wisdom, love, and Providence in the order of the universe constitute the most glorious gospel which can be proclaimed? Nothing of the kind. It is only proved that many Christians are not acting according to their belief, that their practice does not square with their

[1] Appendix.

[2] Sir Leslie Stephen, *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i. p. 144.

profession. The belief and the profession are not proved to be wrong and bad. It would be unreasonable to argue that, because a man who has been vehemently sounding the praises of truthfulness is convicted of deliberate lying, therefore truthfulness is shown to be worthless. It is equally unreasonable to identify Christianity with everything to which it is most definitely opposed, to represent it as the enemy of everything which it was intended to maintain, and then to conclude that Christianity is discredited.[1] As we should argue from the detection of a liar, not that lying is right, but that he should return to the ways of truth, so we should argue from the lives of Christians who live in flagrant contradiction to the precepts of our Lord and His Apostles, not that the precepts should be rejected, but that they should be kept; not that Christianity should be abolished, but that it should be obeyed.

[1] Appendix IV.

Christians have created prejudice, hatred, against Christianity, but it is not Christianity which they have been exhibiting. We repudiate the hideous travesty which they have made, the hideous travesty which is credulously or maliciously accepted by assailants as a correct representation. Christianity is not a religion of darkness and superstition: it calls to its disciples 'Be children of light: prove all things: hold fast that which is good.' Christianity does not sycophantishly court the rich and despise the poor: it tells the stories of the Rich Man and Lazarus, and of the Rich Fool, and it declares 'Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.' Christianity does not teach that the life which a man leads is of less consequence than the belief which he professes: it demands, 'Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?' Christianity is not selfish, is not a system which inculcates the saving of one's own soul as the first and last of duties:

'He that loveth his life shall lose it. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another.' It is surely reasonable to demand that Christianity shall be judged, not by its misrepresentations, but by what it is in itself, not as it has been perverted by bitter enemies, or by false disciples, but as it is proclaimed and manifested in its Author and Finisher.

IV

In the face of such tremendous indictments, what is the duty incumbent on us who profess and call ourselves Christians? Certainly not that we should abjure the name, but that we should remember what the name signifies. We ought to consider our ways, to give ourselves to self-examination. There must be something amiss when such hideous portraits can be painted with any expectation of their being taken as correct likenesses. It is right

that we should repel with indignation the ludicrous and intolerable caricatures which are presented as our belief, the unwarrantable consequences which are deduced from it. It is right that we should remove misapprehensions and refute calumnies; but, above all it is necessary that we should take heed to our own conduct and our own character. The scandals which we have so much reason to deplore owe their existence, not to Christianity, but to the absence of Christianity. And the very sneers which greet any departure from rectitude or morality on the part of a professing Christian prove that such a departure is not a manifestation, but a renunciation of Christianity, that what is expected of Christians is the highest and the best that human nature can produce.

'If,' argues Mr. Blatchford, 'if to praise Christ in words and deny Him in deeds be Christianity, then London is a Christian city and England is a Christian nation. For it is

very evident that our common English ideals are anti-Christian, and that our commercial, foreign, and social affairs are run on anti-Christian lines.'[1] As Mr. Blatchford's life is spent in deploring the baseness of 'our common English ideals,' and in exposing the iniquity of the methods in which 'our commercial, foreign, and social affairs' are conducted, the logical inference would seem to be that, as anti-Christian ideals and anti-Christian lines have so signally failed, it might be well to give Christian ideals and Christian lines a trial. 'In a really humane and civilised nation,' Mr. Blatchford maintains, 'there should be, and there need be, no such thing as Poverty, Ignorance, Crime, Idleness, War, Slavery, Hate, Envy, Pride, Greed, Gluttony, Vice. But,' he continues his curious argument, 'this is not a humane and civilised nation, and never will be while it accepts Christianity as its religion. These,'

[1] *God and my Neighbour.*

so he adds as an irresistible conclusion, 'these are my reasons for opposing Christianity.' [1] Very good reasons, if Christianity taught such a creed and encouraged such a morality. But that any human being should give such a description of the purpose of Christian Faith indicates either that the describer is swayed by blindest prejudice or else that no genuine Christian has ever crossed his path.

'What if some do not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.' Truth continues to be truth, though people who talk much about it may be false. Goodness continues to be goodness, though people who sing its praises may be thoroughly depraved. Generosity does not cease to be generosity, though its beauty should be extolled by a miser. Courage does not cease to be courage, though its heroism should be extolled by a coward. Temperance

[1] *God and my Neighbour*, ch. ix. p. 197.

is temperance, though we should be assured of the fact by the thick speech of a drunkard. The virtue is admirable, even when those who acknowledge how admirable it is do not practise it.

That Christianity towers so far above the attainments of its average disciples, nay, above the attainments of its saintliest, is itself a kind of evidence of its divine origin. 'When the King of the Tartars, who was become Christian,' says Montaigne, 'designed to come to Lyons to kiss the Pope's feet, and there to be an eyewitness of the sanctity he hoped to find in our manners, immediately our good S. Louis sought to divert him from his purpose: for fear lest our inordinate way of living should, on the contrary, put him out of conceit with so holy a belief. And yet it happened quite otherwise to this other, who going to Rome to the same end, and there seeing the dissolution of the Prelates and people of that time, settled

himself so much the more firmly in our religion, considering how great the force and dignity of it must necessarily be that could maintain its dignity and splendour amongst so much corruption and in so vicious hands.' God's truth abides whether men receive it or deny it. Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, though every so-called Christian should become apostate. The woes of the world are to be cured by more Christianity, not by less; and on us, in whose hands have been placed its holy oracles, rests the responsibility of proving its inestimable advantage ourselves and of conferring it on all mankind.

Wherever Christianity has really flourished, untold blessings have been the result.[1] With all the sad deficiencies and sadder perversions by which its course has been chequered, no influence for good can be compared with it in elevating character, in diffusing peace and

[1] Appendix V.

goodwill, in fitting men to labour and to endure. The diffusion of the spirit of Christianity is a synonym for the diffusion of all that tends to the true well-being of the world. Only as genuine Christianity, the Christianity of Christ, prevails, will mankind be morally and spiritually lifted into a higher sphere. Put together the wisest and most ennobling suggestions of those who regard Christianity as obsolete and you find that it is virtually Christianity which is delineated. It is in the prevalence of principles and practices which, however they may be designated, are in reality Christian, that the salvation of society and of individuals will be found. In the absence of such principles and practices will be found the secret of ruin, disorder, dissolution, and decay.

It is false Christianity against which the tornado of abuse is really directed. Where genuine Christianity appears, and is recognised as genuine, it commands respect.

Even the most virulent of recent assailants, who seriously considers that, until we get rid of the 'incubus of the modern Christian religion, our civilisation will so surely decay that we shall become an entirely decadent race,' and who complacently announces that 'it will not be difficult to create a faith and a religion which will serve the needs of humanity where Christianity has so signally failed,' even he is graciously pleased to allow, 'I have no quarrel with Christianity as a code of morals. The Sermon on the Mount, no matter who preached it, is quite sufficient, if its teaching was only practised instead of preached, to make this world an eminently desirable place in which to live. My quarrel is concerned with the professional promoters and organisers of religion who have made the very name of Christianity to stink in the nostrils of honest men.' In other words, it is not to Christianity, but to Christians by whom it is misrepresented, that he is opposed, and he

cannot refrain from granting, though surely with transparent inconsistency, that it is by the noble lives of Christians that Christianity has been so long preserved. 'It won, with its beauty and sentiment, the allegiance of many who were true and manly. And it is such as these who have raised the Gospel from the slough of infamy. It is such as these who, in the darkest ages, have perpetuated by the goodness of their lives the faith that is left to-day. It is the virtues of Christians, not the virtue of Christianity, that keeps the faith alive.'[1] The very opposite is nearer the truth. The virtues of Christians are simply the outcome of the virtue of Christianity: it is the vices of Christians which compose the deepest 'slough of infamy' into which the Gospel has ever been plunged.

But from all these charges and countercharges, it would seem to be clear that real

[1] *Parsons and Pagans.*

Christianity compels respect even where it is viewed with aversion, that its progress is hindered by nothing so much as by the unworthiness of its adherents, that it gains assent by nothing so much as by the manifestation of Christian lives.

Will any one venture to deny that the world would be vastly improved were every one in it to be a genuine Christian, animated by Christian motives, doing Christian deeds? The revolution would be immense, indescribable: it would be the end of all evil: it would be the establishment of all good. No man's hand would be against another, all would strive together for the welfare of the whole, there would be no contention save how to excel in love and in good works. The human imagination cannot depict anything more glorious, more ennobling, than the will of God done on earth as it is done in heaven, and this is what would be if the thoughts of every heart were brought

into captivity to the obedience of Christ. The most splendid dreams of the most exalted visionaries would be more than fulfilled: everything true and lovely and of good report would be ratified and confirmed: everything false and vile would be changed and purified, and nothing to hurt or destroy or defile would remain. The fulfilment of that ideal is simply the universal prevalence of Christianity, the universal triumph of Christ.

The systems and tendencies at which we are about to glance owe their vitality to the Faith which they attempt to supersede. They are, in so far as they are good, either tending towards Christianity or borrowing from it. The insufficiency of mere material well-being, the irresistible association of Religion with Morality, the worship of the Universe, the worship of Humanity, all are signs of the ineradicable instinct of the Unseen and Eternal, of the unquenchable thirst for the Living God; and belief in the Living

God finds its noblest illustration and confirmation in Him Who said, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,' in Him to whom the searching scrutiny of critical inquirers, as well as the fervid devotion of believers, bears so marvellous a witness. We hope to show not only that the abolition of Christianity might 'be attended with sundry inconveniences,' or that the assumption of there being 'nothing in' Christianity is 'not so clear a case,' but we hope to show that if, amid present perplexity and estrangement, many feel themselves obliged to go back and walk no more with Christ, we, for our part, as we hear His voice of tender reproach, 'Will ye also go away?' can only, with heartfelt conviction, give the answer, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.'

MORALITY WITHOUT RELIGION

'I am sought of them that asked not for Me : I am found of them that sought Me not.'—ISAIAH lxv. 1.

'Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.'—ROMANS ii. 13-15.

'Strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.'—EPHESIANS ii. 12.

'The acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness.'—TITUS i. 1.

II

MORALITY WITHOUT RELIGION

That Religion and Morality have no necessary connection is a popular assumption. In books, in pamphlets, in magazines, on platforms, in ordinary conversation, it is loudly proclaimed or quietly insinuated that the morality of the future will be Independent Morality, Morality without Sanction. Morality, it is iterated and reiterated, can get on quite well without Religion: Religion is a positive hindrance to Morality. This view is, no doubt, extreme. Perhaps it is only here and there in the writings which fall into the hands of most of us, or in the circles with which most of us mingle, that the matter is stated so bluntly and so plainly. But in

not a few writings of wide circulation, and in whole classes of the community, the statement is made as if beyond contradiction. Even in works which we are all reading, and in companies where we daily find ourselves, the logical conclusion of arguments, the natural inference from assumptions, would be simply that extreme position. There is no use in evading the fact that if some highly popular opinions are accepted, no statement of the uselessness of Religion in any form or system can be too extreme. The mere assurance that Religion is a reality, is a benefit, is a necessity, though it may not seem a great deal to establish, though it may leave a host of problems still to solve, would be a gain to many, would sweep away the chief doubts by which they are perplexed.

I

There need not, on our part, be any hesitation in declaring, to begin with, that Religion

without Morality is worthless. The attempt to keep them apart, to regard them as independent of each other, has often enough been made by nominal champions of Religion. The upholding of certain views regarding God and His relations to mankind has been considered sufficient to make up for neglect of the duties incumbent on ordinary mortals. The performance of certain rites and ceremonies has been considered an adequate compensation for the commission of deliberate crimes. Instances might easily be cited of persons engaged in villainous schemes, achieving deeds of dishonesty which will cause ruin to hundreds of innocent victims, executing plots of fiendish revenge, with little regard for human life, and no regard at all for truth, but exceedingly punctilious in attention to religious observances. One of the most cold-blooded murderers that ever disgraced the habitable globe was careful not to neglect any act of devotion, and while

perpetrating the most nefarious basenesses never failed to write in his diary the most pious sentiments. That kind of religion is worse than nothing, was rightly regarded as increasing the horror and loathsomeness of the monster's life. In a minor degree, we have all seen illustrations of the same incongruity, we may even have detected indications of it in ourselves, the tendency to imagine that the more we go to church or frequent the Sacraments or read the Bible, we are entitled to latitude in our conduct. There is no tendency against which we need to be more constantly on our guard, none which is more strongly, more terrifically, denounced in the Old Testament and in the New, by prophets and apostles, and by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Unbelievers in Christianity are perfectly right when they say that Religion without Morality is absolutely worthless.

II

We may go further. We may admit, nay, we must vehemently maintain, that Morality without Religion is far better than Religion without Morality. Look at this man who makes no profession of Religion, but who is temperate, honest, self-sacrificing for the public good. Look at that man who made a loud profession, but who was leading a life of secret vice, who was false to the trust reposed in him, who appropriated what had been committed to his charge. Can there be any doubt, we are triumphantly asked, that of these two, the religious is inferior to the irreligious? There can be no doubt whatever, would be the reply of every well-instructed Christian. Morality without Religion is incalculably better than Religion without Morality. But what does this prove with regard to Christianity? It simply proves how eternally true is the parable

of our Lord: 'A certain man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not, but afterwards he repented and went. And he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir, and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto Him, The first,' and our Lord confirmed the answer.

III

That kind of comparison between Religion and Morality is most misleading, for such 'Religion' is not Religion at all. It may be hypocrisy, it may be superstition, it may be self-deception: Christianity it is not, and never can be. The contrast is not really between Morality and Religion, but between Morality and Immorality, Falsehood, Fraud, and Wilful Imposition. Whatever else the Kingdom of God may be, it is at least

Righteousness: where there is no Righteousness, there can be no Kingdom of God. Whatever else Christian doctrine may be, it is at least a doctrine according to godliness, a teaching in accordance with the eternal laws of righteousness. For purposes of analysis and convenience, we may distinguish between Religion and Morality, and show them working in different spheres, but it is utterly erroneous to suppose that they can be actually divorced. In every right and rational representation of the Christian Religion, Morality is included and imbedded, otherwise it is only a maimed and mutilated Religion which is held out for acceptance. On the other hand, in all true Morality, especially in its highest and purest manifestations, Religion is present. It is possible to decry Morality. 'Mere Morality,' in the current acceptation of the phrase, may lack a good deal, may be a phase of self-righteousness, self-interest, cold calculation,

a keeping up of appearances before the world, but Morality itself is of a higher strain: it is the fulfilment of every duty to one's self and to one's neighbour: it implies that each duty is done from the right motive: the purer and loftier it becomes the more it encroaches on the religious domain: it is crowned and glorified with a religious sanction: it is, visible or hidden, conscious or unconscious, a doing of the will of God. Morality, to hold its own, must be 'touched by emotion,' and Morality touched by emotion is identical with Religion. To admit moral obligation in all its length and breadth, and depth and height, is to admit God.[1]

IV

A curious illustration of the fact that Morality, to be permanent, needs the inspiration of Religion, that Morality, at its best and purest, tends to become Religion, is

[1] Appendix.

afforded in such a work as Dr. Stanton Coit's *National Idealism and a State Church.* Dr. Coit has for twenty years been engaged in founding ethical societies, and his high and disinterested aims need not be called in question. But the book is evidence that in order to support the lofty principles which he so earnestly expounds, he is obliged to call in the aid of principles which he imagined himself to have discarded. He begins by denying the Supernatural in every shape and form. He will have none of a personal God, or of a personal immortality. There is no higher being than Man. All trust must be shifted from supernatural to human agencies. 'Combined human foresight, the general will of organised society, assumes the rôle of Creative Providence.' 'This is, then, the presupposition of all moral judgment in harmony with which I would reconstruct the religions of the world: that no crime and no good deed that happens in this world shall

ever be traced to any other moral agencies than those actually inhabiting living human bodies and recognised by other human beings as fit subjects of human rights and privileges.' In other words, Morality, Morality alone, Morality without any sanction from Above, or any hope from Beyond, is the all-sufficient strength and ennoblement of man.

But what is the superstructure which Dr. Stanton Coit proceeds to build upon this foundation? One would naturally expect that Prayer and Churches and Sacraments would have no place. But these are exactly what he insists on retaining; these will apparently be more important, more necessary, in the future than in the past. 'We should appropriate and adapt the materials furnished us by the rites and ceremonies of the historic Church. As the woodbird, bent on building her nest, in lieu of better materials makes it of leaves and of feathers from her breast, so may we use what is familiar, old,

and close at hand. It is all ours; and the homelike beauty of the Church of the future will be enhanced by the ancient materials wrought into its new forms.' So much enhanced, indeed, that most people will be inclined to tolerate the new forms simply because of the ancient materials which are allowed to remain. Among the ancient materials which Dr. Coit appropriates or adapts, prayer occupies a prominent place. And he is severe upon those, *e.g.*, Comte and Dr. Congreve, who would banish petition from the sphere of worship. He delights in pointing out that, in despite of themselves, they include requests for personal blessings. Nor is prayer to be a mere aspiration or inarticulate longing of the soul. 'No mental activity can become definite, coherent, and systematic, and remain so, except it be embodied and repeated in words. . . . A petition that does not, or cannot, or will not, formulate itself in words, and let the lips move to shape them, and the

voice to sound them, and the eye to visualise them on the written or printed page, becomes soon a mere torpor of the mind, or a meaningless movement of blind unrest, or a trick of pretending to pray. Perfected prayer is always spoken.'

To whom, or to what, this prayer, uttered or unexpressed, is to be offered, may be difficult of comprehension. It is not to God, as we have hitherto employed that sacred name; but Dr. Coit insists that the word 'God' shall be retained, and that we have no right to deny to this God the attribute of Personality. 'Any one who worships either a concrete social group or an abstract moral quality may justly protest against the charge that his God is impersonal: he may insist that it is either superpersonal or interpersonal, or both.' The worship of Nature appears to be discouraged, and to be considered as of comparatively little worth. 'We dare never forget that moral qualities stand to us in a

different dynamic relation from the grass and the stars and the sea—no effects upon us or upon these will result from petitions even of a most righteous man to them. But no one can deny that prayers to Purity, Serenity, Faith, Humanity, England, Man, Woman, to Milton, to Jesus, do create a new moral heaven and a new earth for him who thirsts after righteousness.' Leaving the name of our Lord out of the discussion, why should a prayer to Serenity have more moral influence than a prayer to the Sea? Why should a prayer to the Stars be less efficacious than a prayer to Milton, whose soul was like a star and dwelt apart? We have only to invest the stars and the sea with certain qualities evolved from our own imagination to make them as worthy of worship as either Milton or Serenity. Dr. Coit is scathing in his criticism of the Positivist prayers, whether of Comte or of Dr. Congreve: they are 'screamingly funny': 'the most monstrous

absurdity ever perpetrated by a really good and great man.' The epithets are possibly justified; but are they quite inapplicable to one who supposes that an invocation of the Living and Eternal God means no more than an invocation of England, or Faith, or Woman? It is only when God has become to us an abstraction that an abstraction can take the place of God.

A manual of services fitted to a nation's present needs is what, according to Dr. Coit, is required to ensure the progress and triumph of the ethical movement. 'Until the new idealism possesses its own manual of religious ritual, it cannot communicate effectively its deeper thought and purpose. The moment, however, it has invented such a means of communication, it would seem inevitable that a rapid moral and intellectual advancement of man must at last take place, equal in speed and in beneficence to the material advancement which followed

during the last century in the wake of scientific inventions.' The ritual of ethical societies will not outwardly differ much from the ritual to be found in existing religions. Its details have yet to be arranged or 'invented.' The only things certain are that a book of prayers ought to be provided at once, and that in Swinburne's *Songs before Sunrise* may be found an 'anthology of prayer suitable for use in the Church of Humanity,' prayers 'as sublime and quickening in melody and passion as anything in the Hebrew prophets or the Litany of the Church.'

Dr. Coit does not denounce theology as theology, he even insists on being himself ranked among theologians. His readers may be surprised to learn on what doctrines he dwells with particular fondness. He laments that belief in the existence and power of the devil should be waning. 'We may not believe in a personal devil, but we must believe in a devil who acts very like a person.'

He predicts that teachers will more and more teach a doctrine of hell-fire. Out of kindness they will terrify by presenting the evil effects, indirect and remote, of selfish thoughts and dispositions. 'We must frighten people away from the edge of the abyss which begins this side of death.' Finally, though, of course, the word is not used in the ordinary sense, the necessity of the doctrine of the Incarnation is upheld. 'The Incarnation must for ever remain a fundamental conception of religion. Until all men are incarnations of the principle of constructive moral beneficence, and to a higher degree, Jesus will remain pre-eminent; and it is quite possible that in proportion as he is approached, gratitude to him will increase rather than diminish.' 'Even should any one ever in the future transcend him, still it will only be by him and in glad acknowledgment of the debt to him. There never can in the future be a dividing of the world into Christianity

and not Christianity. It will only be a new and more Christian Christianity, compatible with liberty and reason.'

Thus the drift and tendency of this book bring us back, however unintentionally, to the Faith of which it appears, at first sight, to be the renunciation. It establishes irresistibly that Morality, to be living and permanent, must have religious sanction and inspiration, that we need to be delivered from the awful thraldom of evil, that the supreme realities are the things which are unseen; that prayer is the life of the soul; that public worship is a necessity; that in Christ the greatest redemptive power has been embodied, and the purest vision of the Eternal has been granted; and that, in its adaptation to human needs, its fostering of human aspirations, its ministering to human sorrows, its renewal of human penitence, its consecration of life and its hope in death, no Ethical Society yet devised gives any

symptom of being able to supplant the Church of Him Who said, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.'

V

Now, from the fact that Morality at its best assumes a religious tinge, merges itself in Religion, we may legitimately infer that, without the inspiration of Religion, Morality at its best will not long prevail.[1] 'Love, friendship,' said Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, 'good nature, kindness carried to the height of sincere and devoted affection, will always be the chief pleasures of life, whether Christianity is true or false; but Christian Charity is not the same as any of these, or all of these put together, and I think that if Christian Theology were exploded, Christian Charity would not survive it.'[2] At present, when Religion has pervaded everything with its sacred sanctions, it is easy to say that Religion

[1] Appendix VI.

[2] *Nineteenth Century*, June 1884.

would not be greatly missed were it discarded, and that Morality would be unaffected. This is pure conjecture. To test its worth we should need a state of society from which every vestige of Religion had disappeared. It will not do to retain any of the beliefs or the customs which owe their origin to a sense of the Unseen and Eternal, to a sense of any Power above ourselves, ruling our destinies and instilling into our minds thoughts and desires and hopes beyond the visible and the material. If Morality, in the limited acceptation of the term, is sufficient for the elevation and welfare of mankind, it is not to be supported by any admixture of Religion: it must prove its power by itself. Religion must be utterly abolished, its every sanction must be universally rejected, its every impulse must have universally ceased before it can be contended with any measure of assurance that the world will be none the worse, may be even the better, for its vanishing.

If Religion is a delusion, remember what must be eliminated from our convictions. There can be no higher tribunal than that of man by which our actions can be judged.[1] A life of outward propriety is the utmost that can be demanded of us, if it is only against the wellbeing of our neighbour or the promotion of our own happiness that we can transgress. What has human law to do with our hearts? What legislation can deal with 'envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness,' unless they manifest themselves in outward acts? A base, unloving, impure, acrimonious, untruthful man may crawl through life, never having been arrested, never having been sentenced to any term of penal servitude. He can stand erect before all the laws of the country and say, 'All these have I kept from my youth up.' And unless there be a higher law than the law of man, unless there be a law written on our hearts by the Finger of

[1] Appendix VII.

God, unless there be One to whom, above and beyond all earthly appearances, we can mournfully declare, 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned,' nothing more can be reasonably demanded. If there is nothing higher than the visible, it can be only visible results which are of any value. The giving of money to help the needy, and the giving of money in order to obtain a reputation for generosity, must stand on the same level. The widow's mite will be worth infinitely less than the shekels which come from those who devour widows' houses. If there be none to search the heart, none save poor frail fellow-mortals to whom we must give account, what an incentive to purity of motive and loftiness of aspiration is removed! But let men talk as they will, there is a conscience in them which whispers, It does matter whether our hearts as well as our actions are right; it does matter whether we have good motives, good intentions; there is a scrutiny of hearts,

making and to be made more fully yet ; there is One before Whom, even though we have not broken the law of the land, we confess with anguish, Against Thee have I sinned and done evil in Thy sight : where I appear most irreproachable, Thine eye detecteth error : it is not the occasional trespass that I have chiefly to lament, it is the sin that is almost part and parcel of my very being, the sin that corrodes even where it does not glare, the sin that undermines even where it does not crash.

VI

The most thoughtful of those who have lost faith in the Living God and in fellowship with Him hereafter, look on this life with a pessimistic eye. Without trust in the Unseen and Eternal, life is worthless, an idle dream. With its harassing cares, with its petty vexations, with its turbulence and strife, its sorrows, its breaking up of old associations, its quenching the light of our

eyes, 'O dreary were this earth, if earth were all!' On the stage of the world, 'the play is the Tragedy Man, the hero the conqueror worm!'

We cannot but extend the deepest sympathy, the warmest admiration to those who, bereft of belief and of hope, yet cling tenaciously to moral goodness.[1] 'What is to become of us,' asks the pensive Amiel, 'when everything leaves us, health, joy, affections, the freshness of sensation, memory, capacity for work, when the sun seems to us to have lost its warmth, and life is stripped of all its charms? . . . There is but one answer, keep close to Duty. Be what you ought to be; the rest is God's affair. . . . And supposing there were no good and holy God, nothing but universal being, the law of the all, an ideal without hypostasis or reality, duty would still be the key of the enigma, the pole star of a wandering human-

[1] Appendix VIII.

ity.'[1] Who does not see that it is the lingering faith in God which gives strength to this conviction and that, were the faith obliterated, the natural conclusion would be for the cultured, 'Vanity of vanities: all is vanity'; and for the multitudes, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' 'I remember how at Cambridge,' says Mr. F. W. H. Myers of George Eliot, 'I walked with her once in the Fellows' Garden of Trinity on an evening of rainy May: and she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet calls of men—the words *God, Immortality, Duty*—pronounced with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the *first*, how unbelievable the *second*, and yet how peremptory and absolute the *third*. Never, perhaps, have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and uncompromising Law. I

[1] *Journal Intime*, ii.

listened and night fell: her grave, majestic countenance turned toward me like a sibyl's in the gloom, and it was as though she withdrew from my grasp one by one the two scrolls of promise, and left me the third scroll only, awful with inevitable fates. And when we stood at length and parted, amid that columnar circuit of the forest trees, beneath the last twilight of starless skies, I seemed to be gazing, like Titus at Jerusalem, on vacant seats and empty halls, on a sanctuary with no presence to hallow it, and heaven left lonely of a God.' [1]

Withdraw belief in a God above and in a life beyond, the only reason for obedience to Duty and Morality will be either our own pleasure, the doing what is most agreeable to ourselves; or sympathy, the bearing of others' burdens, in the hope that when we have passed away there may be some on earth who will reap the harvest which we have

[1] *Modern Essays.*

sown ; or public opinion, the views which are prevalent in a particular time in a particular region ; and these reasons are hardly likely to produce a morality which will be other than that of self-indulgence, of despair, or of conventionality.[1]

'We can get on very well without a religion,' said Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, 'for though the view of life which Science is opening to us gives us nothing to worship, it gives us an infinite number of things to enjoy. The world seems to me a very good world, if it would only last. It is full of pleasant people and curious things, and I think that most men find no difficulty in turning their minds away from its transient character.' If it would only last! But it does *not* last: those dearer to us than ourselves are snatched away. Could anything be more selfish, more despicably base than to go about saying, All that is of no conse-

[1] Appendix IX.

quence, so long as I meet with pleasant people and have an infinite number of things to enjoy ? It is true that an infinite number of my fellow-creatures may not be enjoying an infinite number of things, may have trouble in recalling almost anything worthy of the name of enjoyment, but why should I be depressed by that ? I find no difficulty in turning away my mind from the misfortunes of others. 'We can get on very well without religion.' No doubt without it some of us can have agreeable society and a variety of pleasures more or less refined ; but this does not prove that religion is no loss. On the same principle, we can get on very comfortably without honesty, without sobriety, without purity, without generosity. We can get on very comfortably indeed without anything except without a heart which is intent on self-gratification, and which excludes all thought of the wants and woes of the world. 'Let us eat and drink, for

to-morrow we die,' is the irresistible, though rather inconsistent, conclusion of that sublime austerity which so indignantly repudiates the merest hint of reward or hope within the veil, and which so sensitively shrinks from the mercenariness of the Religion of the Cross.

> 'The wages of sin is death: if the wages of Virtue be dust,
> Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly?'[1]

What are the facts? What is the growing tendency where men think themselves strong enough to do without religious beliefs, when they have been proclaiming that the suppression of Religion will be the exaltation of a purer Morality? There are plenty of indications that the laws of Morality are found to be as irksome as the dictates of Religion. The first step is to cry out for a higher Morality, to censure the Morality of

[1] Tennyson, *Wages*.

the New Testament as imperfect and inadequate, as selfish and visionary. The next step is to question the restraints of Morality, to clamour for liberty in regard to matters on which the general voice of mankind has from the beginning given no uncertain verdict. The last step is to declare that Morality is variable and conventional, a mere arbitrary arrangement, which can be dispensed with by the emancipated soul. The literature which assumes that Religion is obsolete does not, as a rule, suffer itself to be much hampered by the fetters of Morality. The non-Religion of the Future is what, we are confidently told, increasing knowledge of the laws of Sociology will of necessity bring about. Should that day ever dawn, or rather let us say, should that night ever envelop us, it will mean the diffusion of non-Morality such as the world has never known.[1]

[1] Appendix X.

III

THE RELIGION OF THE UNIVERSE

'Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence.'—PSALM cxxxix. 7.

'Do I not fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.'—JEREMIAH xxiii. 24.

'The heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee.'—1 KINGS viii. 27.

'In Him we live, and move, and have our being.'—ACTS xvii. 28.

'One God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all.'—EPHESIANS iv. 6.

'Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: to Whom be glory for ever. Amen.'—ROMANS xi. 36.

'That God may be all in all.'—1 CORINTHIANS xv. 28.

III

THE RELIGION OF THE UNIVERSE

AMONG proposed substitutes for Christianity, none occupies a more prominent place than Pantheism, the identity of God and the universe. 'Pantheism,' says Haeckel, 'is the world system of the modern scientist.'[1] Pantheism, or the Religion of the Universe, is, in one aspect, a protest against Anthropomorphism, the making of God in the image of man. It is in supposing God to be altogether such as we are, to be swayed by the same motives, to be actuated by the same passions as we are, that the most deadly errors have arisen. Robert Browning, in *Caliban upon Setebos*, represents a half-brutal

[1] *Riddle of the Universe.*

being who lives in a cave speculating upon the government of the world, wondering why it came to be made, and what could be the purpose of the Creator in making it. Every motive that could sway the savage mind is in turn discussed: pleasure, restlessness, jealousy, cruelty, sport. 'Because I, Caliban,' such is the process of his reasoning, 'delight in tormenting defenceless animals, or would crush any one that interfered with my comfort, or do things because my taskmaster obliges me to do them, so must it be with Him Who made the world.' With great grotesqueness, but with marvellous power, the degraded monster argues as to the reasons which could have prompted the Unseen Ruler to frame the earth and its inhabitants. Everything that he attributes to God is in keeping with his own base nature. What is the explanation of the horrors which have been perpetrated in the Name of God? The sacrifice of human

beings, of vanquished enemies, or of the nearest and the dearest, the agonies of self-torture, did not these originate in the transference to the Invisible God of the emotions and principles by which men were guiding their own lives? They had no notion of forbearance and forgiveness and patience, therefore they did not think that there could be forgiveness with God. They were to be turned aside from their fierce, revengeful purposes by bribes and by the protracted sufferings of their foes, therefore they thought that God might be bribed by gifts or propitiated by pains. What they were on earth, delighting in bloodshed and conquest and revelry, that, they supposed, must be the Being or the Beings who ruled in the world unseen.

I

God is not as man is, this was a lesson which ancient prophets struggled to teach. He is not a man that He should lie, or a son

of man that He should repent. He is not to be conceived as influenced by the petty hopes and fears and jealousies which influence the mass of mortals. 'My thoughts are not as your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.' He is infinitely exalted above the best and wisest of His children and to see in Him only their likeness is not to see Him aright. It is not to be denied that the writers of the Old Testament employ anthropomorphic language to vivify the justice and goodness of the Eternal. They speak of His Eyes and of His Face, of His Hands and of His Arm and of His Voice. They speak of Him walking in the Garden and smelling a sweet savour. They speak of Him repenting and being jealous and coming down to see what is done on earth. Such figures, however, as a rule, have a force

and an appropriateness which never can become obsolete or out of date. They even heighten the Majesty and Spotless Holiness of God. They are felt to be, at most, words struggling to express what no words can ever convey: they are the readiest means of impressing on the dull understanding of men their practical duty, of letting them know with what purity and righteousness they have to do. It is not in such figures that any harm can ever lie. The error of taking literally such phrases as 'Hands' or 'Arm' or 'Voice' is not very prevalent, but the error of framing God after our moral image is not distant or imaginary. There is a mode of speaking about Divine Purposes and Divine Motives which must jar on those who have begun to discern the Divine Majesty, to whom the thought of the All-Embracing Presence has become a reality.

II

The representation of the Almighty and Eternal as one of ourselves, as animated by the lowest passions and paltriest prejudices of mankind, as a 'magnified and non-natural' human being, is recognised as ludicrously inadequate and terribly distorted. The representation of the Creator as 'sitting idle at the outside of the Universe and seeing it go,' as having brought it into being and afterwards left it to itself, as mingling no more in its events and evolution, is utterly discarded. It is, however, to such representations that the assaults of modern critics are directed, and in the overthrow of such representations it is imagined that Christianity itself is overthrown. The assailants maintain that Christianity in attributing Personality to God makes Him in the image of man, and separates Him from the Universe. But what is meant by Personality? It does not mean a

being no higher than man, with the limitations and imperfections of man.[1] Mr. Herbert Spencer, who would not ascribe Personality to God, yet affirmed that the choice was not between Personality and something lower than Personality, but between Personality and something higher. 'Is it not just possible that there is a mode of being as much transcending Intelligence and Will as these transcend mechanical motion?'[2] The description of Personality given by the author of the *Riddle of the Universe* would be repudiated by every educated Christian. 'The monistic idea of God, which alone is compatible with our present knowledge of nature, recognises the divine spirit in all things. It can never recognise in God a "personal being," or, in other words, an individual of limited extension in space, or even of human form. God is everywhere.'[3] That conclusion,—we

[1] Appendix XI. [2] *First Principles.*
[3] *Confession of Faith of a Man of Science.*

are not concerned with the steps by which the conclusion is reached,—does not strike one as a modern discovery. In what authoritative statement of Christian doctrine God is defined as *not* being everywhere, or 'an individual of limited extension in space, or even of human form,' we are unaware. There is apparent misunderstanding in the supposition that we have to take our choice between God as entirely severed from the world, and God existing in the world. God, it is asserted in current phraseology, cannot be both Immanent and Transcendent; He cannot be both in the world and above it. 'In Theism,' so Haeckel draws out the comparison, 'God is opposed to Nature as an extra-mundane being, as creating and sustaining the world, and acting upon it from without, while in Pantheism God, as an intra-mundane being, is everywhere identical with Nature itself, and is operative within the world as "force" or

"energy."'[1] If there is no juggling with words here, it can hardly be juggling with words to point out that so far as 'space' goes, an intra-mundane being, rather than an extra-mundane, is likely to be 'limited in extension.'

III

The imagination that the Christian God is a Personality like ourselves, and is to be found only above and beyond the world, finds perhaps its strangest expression in some of the writings of that ardent lover of Nature, the late Richard Jefferies. 'I cease,' so he writes in *The Story of my Heart*, 'to look for traces of the Deity in life, because no such traces exist. I conclude that there is an existence, a something higher than soul, higher, better, and more perfect than deity. Earnestly I pray to find this something better than a god. There is something superior, higher, more good. For this I search, labour,

[1] *Riddle of the Universe.*

think, and pray. . . . With the whole force of my existence, with the whole force of my thought, mind, and soul, I pray to find this Highest Soul, this greater than deity, this better than God. Give me to live the deepest soul-life now and always with this soul. For want of words I write soul, but I think it is something beyond soul.' Could anything be more pathetic or, at the same time, more self-refuting? How can anything be greater than the Infinite, more enduring than the Eternal, better than the All-Pure and All-Perfect? It could be only the God of unenlightened, unchristian teaching, Whom he rejected. The God Whom he sought must be not only in but beyond and above all created or developed things. It was, indeed, the Higher than the Highest that he worshipped. It was for God, for the Living God, that his eager soul was athirst, and it is in God, the Living God, that his eager soul is now, we humbly trust, for ever satisfied.

IV

'The heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Him.' 'Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?' 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways saith the Lord.' 'In Him we live and move and have our being.' 'Of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to Whom be glory for ever. Amen.'[1] Now it cannot be denied that some who have striven to express after this fashion the unutterable majesty and the universal presence of God, who have endeavoured to demonstrate that God is in all things, and that all things are in God, have at times failed to make their meaning plain. Either from the obscurity of their own language, or from the obtuseness of their readers, they have been considered Atheists. While vehemently asserting that God is

[1] Appendix XII.

everywhere, they have been taken to mean that God is nowhere. The actual conclusion to be drawn from the treatises of Spinoza, the reputed founder of modern Pantheism, is still undecided. But no one now would brand him with the name of Atheist. He was excommunicated by Jews and denounced by Christians, yet there are many who think that his aim, his not unsuccessful aim, was to establish faith in the Unseen and Eternal on a basis which could not be shaken. So far from denying God, he was, according to one of the greatest of German theologians, 'a God-intoxicated man.' 'Offer up reverently with me a lock of hair to the manes of the holy, repudiated Spinoza! The high world-spirit penetrated him: the Infinite was his beginning and his end: the Universe his only and eternal love. . . . He was full of religion and of the Holy Spirit, and therefore he stands alone and unreachable, master in his art above the profane multitude,

without disciples and without citizenship.'[1] Dean Stanley went so far as to say that 'a clearer glimpse into the nature of the Deity was granted to Spinoza, the excommunicated Jew of Amsterdam, than to the combined forces of Episcopacy and Presbytery in the Synod of Dordrecht.'[2] Such a judgment is rather hard upon the divines who took part in that celebrated Synod, but at any rate it indicates that the great philosopher, misunderstood and persecuted, was elaborating in his own way, this great truth, 'In him we live and move and have our being.' 'Of Him, and through Him are all things.'

V

In their loftiest moments, contemplating the marvels of the heavens above and the earth beneath, devout souls have, wherever they looked, been confronted with the Vision of God. 'What do I see in all

[1] Schleiermacher. [2] *St. Andrews Addresses.*

Nature?' said Fénelon, 'God. God is everything, and God alone.' 'Everything,' said William Law, 'that is in being is either God or Nature or Creature: and everything that is not God is only a manifestation of God; for as there is nothing, neither Nature nor Creature, but what must have its being in and from God, so everything is and must be according to its nature more or less a manifestation of God.'

It is the thought which has inspired poets of the most diverse schools, which has been their most marvellous illumination and ecstasy.

Now it is Alexander Pope:

> All are but parts of one stupendous whole
> Whose body Nature is, and God the soul.

Now it is William Cowper:

> There lives and works
> A soul in all things and that soul is God.

Now it is James Thomson of *The Seasons*:

> These, as they change, Almighty Father! these
> Are but the varied God. The rolling year
> Is full of Thee.

Now it is William Wordsworth :

> I have felt
> A Presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts, a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man
> A motion and a spirit which impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things.

Now it is Lord Tennyson :

> The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains,
> Are not these, O Soul, the vision of Him Who reigns ?
> . . . . . .
> Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet.
> Closer is He than breathing and nearer than hands or feet.

Certainly, we may say, nothing atheistic in utterances like these : they are the utterances of lofty thought, of profound piety, of soaring aspiration, and of childlike faith. They have a pantheistic tinge : what is there to dread in Pantheism ? Not much in

Pantheism of that kind: would there were more of it! But it will be observable that, in the instances cited, though God is in Nature and manifesting Himself through it, there is a clear distinction between Nature and God. It may seem as if it were merely the sky, the sun, the stars, the ocean, that are apostrophised: in reality it is a Life, a Spirit, a Power not themselves, in which they live and move and have their being: not to them, but to That, are the prayers addressed. And, we venture to think, it is scarcely ever otherwise: scarcely ever is the Visible alone invoked: identify God as men will with the material universe, or even with the force and energy with which the material universe is pervaded, when they enter into communion with it, in spite of themselves they endow it with the Life and the Will and the Purpose which they have in theory rejected. But the absolute identification of God and the Universe, the assumption that above and

beneath and through all there is no conscious Righteousness and Wisdom and Love overruling and directing, *that* is a belief to be resisted, a belief which enervates character and enfeebles hope.[1] 'Whoever says in his heart that God is *no more* than Nature: whoever does not provide *behind the veil of creation* an infinite reserve of thought and beauty and holy love, that might fling aside this universe and take another, as a vesture changing the heavens and they are changed, . . . is bereft of the essence of the Christian Faith, and is removed by only accidental and precarious distinctions from the atheistic worship of mere "natural laws."'[2] 'In our worship we have to do, not so much with His finite expression in created things as with His own free self and inner reality . . . all *religion* consists in *passing Nature by*, in order to enter into direct personal relation

[1] Appendix XIII.
[2] Martineau, *Hours of Thought*, ii. p. 110.

with Him, soul to soul. It is *not* Pantheism to merge all the life of the physical universe in Him, and leave Him as the inner and sustaining Power of it all. It *is* Pantheism to *rest* in this conception: to merge Him in the universe and see Him only there: and not rather to dwell with Him as the Living, Holy, Sympathising Will, on Whose free affection the cluster of created things lies and plays, as the spray upon the ocean.' [1]

VI

God is *not* as we are, and yet He *is* as we are. God is not made in the image of man, but man is made in the image of God. It is through human goodness and human purity and human love that we attain our best conceptions of the Divine Goodness and Purity and Love. 'If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father

[1] Martineau, *Hours of Thought*, ii. p. 114.

give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him ?' Picture to yourself what is highest and best in the human relationship of father and child : be sure that the Heavenly Father will not fall below, but will infinitely transcend, that standard. All the justice and goodness which we have seen on earth are the feebler reflection of His. It is by learning that the utmost height of human goodness is but a little way towards Him that we learn to think of Him at all aright. But the justice and the love by which he acts are different only in degree, and not in kind, from ours. When we think of God as altogether such as we are, we degrade Him, we have before us the image of the imperfect ; when we try to think of Him under no image and to discard all figures, He vanishes into unreality and nothingness, but when we see Him in Christ, we have before us that which we can grasp and understand, and that in which there is no imperfection.

If there is no God but the universe, we have a universe without a God. Worship is meaningless, Faith is a mockery, Hope is a delusion. If the universe is God, all things in the universe are of necessity Divine. The distinction between right and wrong is broken down. In a sense very different from that in which the phrase was originally employed, 'Whatever is, is right.' Nothing can legitimately be stigmatised as wrong, for there is nothing which is not God. 'If all that is is God, then truth and error are equally manifestations of God. If God is all that is, then we hear His voice as much in the promptings to sin as in the solemn imperatives of Conscience. This is the inexorable logic of Pantheism, however disguised.'[1] 'I know,' says Mr. Frederic Harrison, 'what is meant by the Power and Goodness of an Almighty Creator. I know what is meant by the genius and patience

[1] *Faith of a Christian.*

and sympathy of man. But what is the All, or the Good, or the True, or the Beautiful? . . . The "All" is not good nor beautiful: it is full of horror and ruin. . . . There lies this original blot on every form of philosophic Pantheism when tried as the basis of a religion or as the root-idea of our lives, that it jumbles up the moral, the unmoral, the non-human and the anti-human world, the animated and the inanimate, cruelty, filth, horror, waste, death, virtue and vice, suffering and victory, sympathy and insensibility.'[1] Where these distinctions are lost, where this confusion exists, what logically must be the consequence? Honesty and dishonesty, truth and falsehood, purity and impurity, kindness and brutality, are put upon a level, are alike manifestations of the One or the All.

It is said that in our day the sense of sin has grown weak, that men are not troubled

[1] *Creed of a Layman*, p. 203.

by it as once they were. There is a morbid, scrupulous remorsefulness for wrong-doing, a desponding conviction that repentance and restoration are impossible, which may well be put away. But that sin should be no longer held to be sin, that evil should be wrought and the worker experience no pang of shame, would surely indicate moral declension and decay. Were the time to come when, universally, mankind should commit those actions and cherish those passions which, through all ages in all lands, have gone by the name of sin, should become so heedless to the voice of conscience, that conscience should cease to speak, the time would have come when men, being past feeling, would devote themselves with greediness to anything that was vile, so long as it was pleasant, the bonds of society would be loosened and destruction would be at hand. The Religion of the Universe ignores the facts of life, the sorrow, the struggle,

the depravity, the need of redemption. Fortunately, human beings in general are still inclined to mourn because of imperfection or of baseness: still they are inclined at times to cry out, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' and still they have the opportunity of joyfully or humbly saying, 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

'And now at this day,' listen to the ungrudging admission of perhaps the most earnest English apostle of Pantheism, Mr. Allanson Picton: 'We of all schools, whether orthodox or heterodox so-called, whether believers or unbelievers in supernatural revelation, all who seek the revival of religion, the exaltation of morality, the redemption of man, draw, most of us, our direct impulse, and all of us, directly or indirectly, our ideals from the speaking vision of the Christ. Such a claim is justified, not merely by the spiritual power still remaining in the Church,

but almost as much by the tributes paid, and the uses of the Gospel teaching made in the writings of the most distinguished among rationalists. . . . Such writers have felt that somehow Jesus still holds, and ought to hold, the heart of humanity under His beneficial sway. Excluding the partial, imperfect and temporary ideas of Nature, spirits, hell, and heaven, which the Galilean held with singular lightness for a man of His time, they have acquiesced in and even echoed His invitation to the weary and heavy laden, to take His yoke upon them and learn of Him. And that means to live up to His Gospel of the nothingness of self, and of unreserved sacrifice to the Eternal All in All.' [1]

If such is the conclusion of Rationalism and of Pantheism, how much more ought it to be the conclusion of Christianity. The imagination of a God confined to times and places, visiting the world only occasionally,

[1] *Religion of the Universe.*

manifesting Himself in the past and not in the present, ought to be as foreign to the Christian Church as to any Rationalist or Pantheist. Be it ours to show that we believe in God Who filleth all things with His presence, Who is from Everlasting to Everlasting, that to us there is but one God the Father, by Whom are all things and we in Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things and we by Him, that God has identified Himself with us in Jesus Christ, His Son. Be it ours to lose ourselves in Him. For, after all our questionings as to the government of the world, as to abounding misery and degradation, as to what lies beyond the veil for ourselves and for others, this is our hope and our confidence: 'God hath concluded all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out. For who hath

known the mind of the Lord ? or who hath been His counsellor ? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again ? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things : to Whom be glory for ever. Amen.'

IV

THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY

'And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' —Genesis i. 26.

'When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained, what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels and hast crowned him with glory and honour.'—Psalm viii. 3-5

Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him. But now we see not yet all things put under Him. But we see Jesus Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.'—Hebrews ii. 8, 9.

IV

THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY

THE position which Religion, and especially the Christian Religion, assigns to man, to man as he ought to be, is very high. He is made in the image of God, he is a little lower than the angels, a little lower than God, he is a partaker of the Divine Nature. But as the corruption of the best is the worst, there is nothing in the whole creation more miserable, more loathsome, than man as he has forgotten his high estate and plunged himself into degradation. 'What man has made of man,' is the saddest, most deplorable sight in all the world. Amid the awful splendour of the winning loveliness of Nature, 'only man is vile.' That is the terrible

verdict which may be pronounced upon him renouncing his birthright, surrendering himself to the powers which he was meant to keep in subjection. It is not the verdict to be pronounced on Man as Man, the child of the highest and the heir of all the ages. The appeal of Religion, the appeal of Christianity above all, has continually been, O sons of men, sully not your glorious garments, cast not away your glorious crown.

I

It is irreligion, it is unbelief, which comes and says, Lay aside these fantastic notions as to your greatness: you are the creatures of a day: you belong, like other animals, to the world of sense, and you pass away along with them: a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast. Banish your delusive hopes; confine yourselves to reality; waste not your time in the pursuit of phantoms: make the best of the world in

which you are: seize its pleasures: shut your eyes to its sorrows: enjoy yourselves in the present and let the future take care of itself: follow the devices and desires of your own hearts in the comfortable assurance that there is no judgment to which you can be brought, save that which exists in the realm of imagination.

Listening to such whispers, obeying such suggestions, walking in such courses, the spectacle which man presents can be viewed only with compassion, with horror, or with disdain. His ideals, his aspirations, his self-sacrifices are only so many phases of self-deception. The natural conclusion to be drawn from denying the spiritual origin and eternal prospects of man must be that he is of no more account than any of the transitory beings around him, that, if he has any superiority over them, it is only the superiority of a skill with which he can make them the instruments of

his purposes. With no glimpses of a higher world, with no inspirations from a Spirit nobler than his own, he can hardly regard the achievements of heroism as other than acts of madness, he can be fired with no desire to emulate them, he cannot well be trusted to perform ordinary acts of honesty and morality, let alone extraordinary acts of generosity and magnanimity, should they come in collision with his objects and ambitions.

> Unless above himself he can
> Erect himself, how mean a thing is Man!

Deny his divine fellowship, extirpate his heavenly anticipations, and it might seem as if no race on earth would be so poor as do him reverence.

II

One thing is assumed by not a few, the absurdity of the Almighty caring for such a race, and therefore the impossibility of the Incarnation. 'Which,' asks Mr. Frederic

Harrison, 'is the more deliriously extravagant, the disproportionate condescension of the Infinite Creator, or the self-complacent arrogance with which the created mite accepts, or rather dreams of, such an inconceivable prerogative? His planet is one of the least of all the myriad units in a boundless Infinity; in the countless æons of time he is one of the latest and the briefest; of the whole living world on the planet, since the ages of the primitive protozoon, man is but an infinitesimal fraction. In all this enormous array of life, in all these æons, was there never anything living which specially interested the Creator, nothing that the Redeemer could care for, or die for? If so, what a waste creation must have been! . . . Why was all this tremendous tragedy, great enough to convulse the Universe, confined to the minutest speck of it, for the benefit of one puny and very late-born race?'[1]

[1] *Creed of a Layman*, p. 67.

But is it not the fact that along with the discovery of Man's utter insignificance, there has come the discovery of powers and faculties unknown and unsuspected, so that more than ever all things are in subjection to him, his dominion has become wider, his throne more firmly established? Is it not the fact that the whole realm of Nature is explored by him, is compelled to minister to his wants or to unfold its treasures of knowledge? Is it not the fact that more than ever it can be said:

> The lightning is his slave: heaven's utmost deep
> Gives up her stars, and, like a flock of sheep,
> They pass before his eye, are numbered, and roll on.
> The tempest is his steed: he strides the air.
> And the Abyss shouts from her depth laid bare
> 'Heaven, hast thou secrets? Man unveils me: I have none.'[1]

Is it not the fact that deposed from his position of proud pre-eminence as centre of the universe, Man has by his labours and his ingenuity reasserted his high prerogative

[1] Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound.*

to be lord of the creation? The printing-press, the railway, the telegraph, how have inventions like these invested him with an influence which he did not possess before! And is it not the fact that when most conscious of our nothingness before the immensities around us, when humbled and prostrate before the Infinite of which we have caught a transitory glimpse, we are also most conscious of our high destiny, we are lifted above the earthly to the heavenly, we discern that, though we cannot claim a moment, yet Eternity is ours? 'What, then, is Man! What, then, is Man! He endures but an hour and is crushed before the moth. Yet in the being and in the working of a faithful man is there already (as all faith, from the beginning, gives assurance) a something that pertains, not to this wild death element of Time; that triumphs over Time, and *is*, and will be, when Time shall be no more.' [1]

[1] Thomas Carlyle.

Man's place in the universe may, according to Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, be nearer the centre of things than has so commonly come to be accepted. Modern discovery, he maintains, has thrown light on the interesting problem of our relation to the Universe; and even though such discovery may have no bearing upon theology or religion, yet, he thinks, it proves that our position in the material creation is special and probably unique, and that the view is justified which holds that 'the supreme end and purpose of this vast universe was the production and development of the living soul in the perishable body of man.' And another, a convinced and ardent disciple of Evolution, the late Professor John Fiske, argues that, 'not the production of any higher creature, but the perfecting of humanity is to be the glorious consummation of Nature's long and tedious work. . . . Man seems now, much more clearly than ever, the chief among God's

creatures. . . . The whole creation has been groaning and travailing together in order to bring forth that last consummate specimen of God's handiwork, the Human Soul.' [1] If this be so, this conclusion arrived at by those who do not hold the ordinary faith of Christendom, then the objection that the Incarnation could not have taken place for the redemption of such a race as ours, in a world which is so poor a fraction of the infinite universe, falls to the ground; and the protest of a devout modern poet carries conviction with it:

> This earth too small
> For Love Divine! Is God not Infinite?
> If so, His Love is infinite. Too small!
> One famished babe meets pity oft from man
> More than an army slain! Too small for Love!
> Was Earth too small to be of God created?
> Why then too small to be redeemed?[2]

Man may, or may not, occupy a 'central position in the universe': other worlds may,

[1] *Man's Destiny*, p. 31.

[2] Aubrey de Vere.

or may not, be inhabited: this earth may be but a minute and insignificant speck amid the mighty All, this at least is certain, that not by mere magnitude is our rank in the scale of being to be decided, and that in the spirit of man will be found that which approaches most nearly to Him who is Spirit. 'The man who reviles Humanity on the ground of its small place in the scale of the Universe is,' according to Mr. Frederic Harrison, 'the kind of man who sneers at patriotism and sees nothing great in England, on the ground that our island holds so small a place in the map of the world. On the atlas England is but a dot. Morally and spiritually, our Fatherland is our glory, our cradle, and our grave.' [1]

III

Hence, one of the ablest attempts to supersede Christianity is that which goes by

[1] *Creed of a Layman*, p. 76.

the name of Positivism or the Religion of Humanity, which sets Man on the throne of the universe, and makes of him the sole object of worship. 'A helper of men outside Humanity,' said the late Professor Clifford, 'the Truth will not allow us to see. The dim and shadowy outlines of the Superhuman Deity fade slowly away from before us, and, as the mist of His Presence floats aside, we perceive with greater and greater clearness the shape of a yet grander and nobler figure, of Him who made all gods and shall unmake them. From the dim dawn of history, and from the inmost depths of every soul, the face of our Father *Man* looks out upon us with the fire of eternal youth in His eyes, and says, "Before Jehovah was, I am."' The founder of the organised Religion of Humanity was Auguste Comte, who died in the year 1857. He held that in the development of mankind there are three stages: the first, the Theological, in which

worship is offered to God or gods ; the second, the Metaphysical, in which the human mind is groping after ultimate truth, the solution of the problems of the universe ; the third, the Positive, in which the search for the illusive and the unattainable is abandoned, and the real and the practical form the exclusive occupation of the thoughts. On Sunday, October 19, 1851, he concluded a course of Lectures on the General History of Humanity with the uncompromising announcement, 'In the name of the Past and of the Future, the servants of Humanity, both its philosophical and practical servants, come forward to claim as their due the general direction of this world. Their object is to constitute at length a real Providence, in all departments, moral, intellectual, and material. Consequently they exclude, once for all, from political supremacy, all the different servants of God, Catholic, Protestant, or Deist, as being at once behindhand and

a source of disturbance.' All religions were banished by the truly 'uncompromising announcement': they were all condemned as futile and unreal. The best that could be said of the worship of the past was that it directed 'provisionally the evolution of our best feelings, under the regency of God, during the long minority of Humanity.'

But the fact that Religion will not be banished, that it must somehow find expression, never received fuller verification. We do not dwell upon the private life of Comte, its eccentricities and inconsistencies, but this at least cannot be omitted: he practised a course of austere religious observances, he worshipped not only Humanity at large, but he paid special adoration to a departed friend such as hardly the devoutest of Roman Catholics has ever paid to the Virgin Mary. Positivism became, what Professor Huxley called it, 'Catholicism *minus* Christianity.' Comte laid down for the guidance of his

disciples, who are potentially all mankind, rules which no existing religious communion can surpass in minuteness. The Supreme Object of Worship is the Great Being, Humanity, the Sum of Human Beings, past, present, and future. But as it is only too evident that too many of these beings in the past and the present, whatever may be said about the future, are not very fitting objects of worship, Humanity, the Great Being, must be understood as including only worthy members, those who have been true servants of Humanity. The emblem of this Great Being is a Woman of the age of thirty, with her son in her arms; and this emblem is to be placed in all temples of Humanity and carried in all solemn processions. The highest representatives of Humanity are the Mother, the Wife, and the Daughter; the Mother representing the past, the Wife the present, and the Daughter the future. These are in the abstract to be regarded as the guardian

angels of the family. To these angels every one is to pray three times daily, and the prayers, which may be read, but which must be the composition of him who uses them, are to last for two hours. Humanity, the World, and Space form the completed Trinity of the Positivist Religion. There are nine sacraments: Presentation, Initiation, Admission, Destination, Marriage, Maturity, Retirement, Transformation, Incorporation. There is a priesthood, to whom is committed the duties of deciding who may or may not be admitted to certain offices during life, of deciding also whether or not the remains of those who have been dead for seven years should be removed from the common burial-place, and interred in 'the sacred wood which surrounds the temple of humanity,' every tomb there 'being ornamented with a simple inscription, a bust, or a statue, according to the degree of honour awarded.' The priests are to receive so comprehensive

a training that they are not to be fully recognised till forty-two years of age. They are to combine medical knowledge with their priestly qualifications. Three successive orders are necessary for the working of the organisation: the Aspirants admitted at twenty-eight, the Vicars or Substitutes at thirty-five, and the Priests proper at forty-two.

The Religion of Humanity has a Calendar, each month of twenty-eight days being in one aspect dedicated to some social relation, and in another to some famous man representing some phase of human progress: Moses, Homer, Aristotle, Cæsar, St. Paul, Gutenberg, Shakespeare. Each day of the year is dedicated to one or more great men or women, five hundred and fifty-eight in number, and the last day of the year is the Festival of All the Dead. 'Our Calendar is designed to remind us of all types of the teachers, leaders, and makers of our race: of the many modes in which the servants of Human-

ity have fulfilled their service. The prophets, the religious teachers, the founders of creeds, of nations and systems of life: the poets, the thinkers, the artists, kings, warriors, statesmen and rulers: the inventors, the men of science and of all useful arts. . . . Every day of the Positivist year is in one sense a day of the dead, for it recalls to us some mighty teacher or leader who is no longer on earth. . . . But the three hundred and sixty-four days of the year's calendar have left one great place unfilled. . . . Those myriad spirits of the forgotten dead, whom no man can number, whose very names were unknown to those around them in life, the fathers and the mothers, the husbands and the wives, the brothers and the sisters, the sturdy workers and the fearless soldiers in the mighty host of civilisation—shall we pass them by? . . . It is those whom to-night we recall, all those who have lived a life of usefulness in their generation, though

they tugged as slaves at the lowest bank of oars in the galley of life, though they were cast unnoticed into the common grave of the outcast, all whose lives have helped and not hindered the progress of Humanity, we recall them all to-night.' [1]

IV

The Religion of Humanity has numbered among its adherents, in part or in whole, several celebrated persons in this country, such as Richard Congreve, Dr. Bridges, Professor Beesley, Cotter Morison, George Eliot. But at present it has no more eloquent and earnest advocate than Mr. Frederic Harrison, who, in *The Creed of a Layman*, and several other recent volumes, has passionately proclaimed its principles. For more than fifty years he has been its apostle: 'every other aim or occupation has been subsidiary and instrumental to this.' [2] It

[1] Frederic Harrison, *Creed of a Layman.*

[2] *Memories and Thoughts*, p. 14.

is true that in some points he has retained his independence, and while those outside accuse him of fanaticism, some of his fellow-believers suspect him of heresy.[1] But he himself is assured that in the worship of Humanity he has obtained the solution of his doubts [2] and the satisfaction of his spirit, and on his gravestone or his urn he would have inscribed the words, *He found peace.*[3] There is much that is marvellously elevated in thought as well as exquisite in expression, profoundly devout as well as brilliantly argued, in the narrative of his progress towards his present position. But when his vehement statements are carefully examined, it will almost inevitably be seen that all that is good and sensible in them is an unconscious reproduction of Christianity. His negations disappear: the affirmations which he makes are those which the Church has always

[1] *Memories and Thoughts*, p. 15.
[2] Appendix XIV. [3] *Creed of a Layman.*

maintained. The faith of his childhood permeates and strengthens and beautifies the creed which he adopted in his maturer years. The unity of mankind, the memory of the departed, the necessity of living for others, these are no novelties in Christianity. It is in Christ that they have specially been brought to light, in Him that they find their highest ratification, without Him they remain unfulfilled, with Him they attain to consistency and power.

The Great Being, Humanity, is only an abstraction.[1] 'There is no such thing in reality,' Principal Caird reminds us, 'as an animal which is no particular animal, a plant which is no particular plant, a man or humanity which is no individual man. It is only a fiction of the observer's mind.' There is logical force as well as humorous illustration in the contention of Dean Page Roberts, that 'there is no more a humanity apart

[1] Appendix XV.

from individual men and women than there is a great being apart from all individual dogs, which we may call Caninity, or a transcendent Durham ox, apart from individual oxen, which may be named Bovinity.' [1] Nor does the geniality of Mr. Chesterton render his argument the less telling: 'It is evidently impossible to worship Humanity, just as it is impossible to worship the Savile Club: both are excellent institutions to which we may happen to belong. But we perceive clearly that the Savilė Club did not make the stars and does not fill the universe. And it is surely unreasonable to attack the doctrine of the Trinity as a piece of bewildering mysticism, and then to ask men to worship a being who is ninety million persons in one God, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance.' [2]

Can it be doubted that the Great Being,

[1] *Some Urgent Questions in Christian Lights.*
[2] *Heretics*, p. 96.

the sum of human beings, is less conceivable, less worthy of worship than the Great Being, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ?[1] Can it be doubted that the claim of Humanity to worship is less credible if we exclude the Perfect Man, Christ Jesus, from our view ? Can it be doubted that the Positivist motto, 'Live for others,' gains a force and a meaning unapproached elsewhere from the Life and Death of Him Who said, 'The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His Life a ransom for many ?' Humanity knit together in One, purified from every stain, glorious and adorable, is a lofty and inspiring idea, but nowhere has it been disclosed save in the Man Christ Jesus, the Word made Flesh, the Brightness of the Father's glory and the Express Image of His Person.

[1] Appendix XVI.

V

Dr. Richard Congreve owns that much of the Religion of Humanity exists already in the Christian Faith, but, in one respect, he asserts that the Religion of Humanity can claim to be entirely original. 'We accept, so have all men. We obey, so have all men. We venerate, so have some in past ages, or in other countries. We add but one other term, we love.' [1] That is what distinguishes this new religion and proves its superiority to the old: its votaries have attained this new principle and mode of life: they love one another. The boldness of the claim may stagger us. We turn over the pages of the New Testament. We see that Love is the fulfilling of the Law; is the end of the commandment; is the sum of the Law and the Prophets; is placed at the very summit of Christian graces; is the bond of perfectness;

[1] Appendix XVII.

is manifested in a Life and a Death which, after nineteen centuries, remain without a parallel. We recall the touching legend that in his old age the Apostle S. John was daily carried into the assembly of the Ephesian Christians, simply repeating to them, over and over, the words, 'Love one another. This is our Lord's command, fulfil this and nothing else is needed.' We recall that in early centuries the sympathy and helpfulness by which Christians of all ranks and races were united called forth from heathen spectators the amazed and respectful exclamation, 'See how these Christians love one another!' Recalling these things, we cannot but be startled that, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, a teacher should, with any expectation of being believed, have ventured to affirm that the great discovery which it has been reserved for the present day to make is that of loving one another. Ignorance of Christianity, misrepresentation

of Christianity, we may well call it: ignorance inconceivable, misrepresentation inconceivable: and yet, as we consider the state of Christendom, do we not see what palliates the ignorance and the misrepresentation? Have we not reason to confess that, if the commandment be not new, universal obedience to it would be new indeed? May the calm assurance that love is foreign to Christianity not startle us into the conviction that we have forgotten what, according to our Lord's own declaration, the chief feature of Christianity ought to be? 'By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.'

VI

'How can we,' it has been well said, 'be asked to give the name of Religion of Humanity to a religion that ignores the greatest human being that ever lived, and the very source from which the Religion of Humanity

sprang ?' [1] Man in himself, man so full of imperfections, man having no connection with any world but this, man unallied to any Power higher, nobler than himself, is this to be our God ? Which is more reasonable : to set up the race of man, unpurified, unredeemed, worthless and polluted, as the object of adoration, or to maintain that 'Man indeed is the rightful object of our worship, but in the roll of ages, there has been but one Man Whom we can adore without idolatry, the Man Christ Jesus' ? [2] The Religion of Humanity, so called, would have us worship Man apart from Christ Whom yet all acknowledge to be the glory of mankind, but we call on men to worship Christ Jesus, for in Him we see Man without a stain, we see our nature redeemed and consecrated, we see ourselves brought nigh to the Infinite God. We adore Humanity, but Humanity

[1] E. A. Abbott, *Through Nature to Christ.*

[2] Frederick William Robertson, Sermon on *John's Rebuke of Herod.*

in its purity: we adore Humanity, but only as manifesting in the Only Begotten Son the glory of the Eternal Father. Thus we place no garland around the vices of the human race: thus we abase, and thus we exalt: thus are we humbled to the dust, thus are we raised to the highest heavens. Apart from Christ, the magnitude of the creation may well depress and overwhelm: apart from Christ the human race is morally imperfect instead of being a fit object of blind adoration. Seeing Christ, we not only feel our inconceivable nothingness in presence of the Infinite Majesty, but we stand erect and unpresumptuously say, 'We wonder not that Thou art mindful of those for whom that Son of Man lived and died, we are in Him partakers of the Divine Nature. There thou beholdest Thine Own Image.'

Made in the image of God, such is the ideal of Man that comes to us from the beginning of his history; and such is the ideal

that once, and once only, has been realised. '*Ecce Homo!* Behold the Man!' said Pontius Pilate, in words more full of significance than he knew, pointing to the victim of priestly hatred and popular fickleness. Behold the Man! man as he ought to be, the Image of God. Before that Divine Humanity we reverently bow, to that Divine Humanity we humbly consecrate ourselves, in fellowship with It alone we learn and manifest the true worth and dignity of Man.

One writing frantically to exalt mankind and to depreciate Christianity, tells us how he sat on a cliff overhanging the seashore and gazed upon the stars, murmuring, 'O prodigious universe, and O poor ignorant, that could believe all these were made for him!' but the sight of a steamship caused him to rejoice at the triumph of Art over Nature, and to exclaim, 'If man is small in relation to the universe, he is great in relation to the earth: he abbreviates distance and time,

and brings the nations together.' Then he saw that man is ordained to master the laws of which he is now the slave ; he believed that if man could understand this mission, a new religion would animate his life, and, in the strength of this revelation, the writer says that he sang in ecstasy to the waters and winds and birds and beasts, he felt a rapture of love for the whole human race, he resolved to preach the New Gospel far and wide, and proclaim the glorious mission of mankind.[1]

On the whole the Old Gospel will be found as ennobling, as inspiring, as practical as the New. All that this new Gospel aims at, we, as Christians, already believe : and we possess a Divine Token, a Sacred Pledge which is foreign to it : we believe that a higher destiny is in store for us than even the construction of wonders of mechanical skill.[2] Stripped of all rhetoric, the conclusion of unbelief in God and Immortality can only

[1] Winwood Reade, *The Outcast.*

[2] Appendix XVIII.

be 'Man is what he eats': the conclusion of Christianity, 'There is but one object greater than the soul, and that is its Creator.'

One in a certain place testified, saying, 'What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels: Thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.' For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see JESUS Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour. We see Him Who is our Brother and our Forerunner within the veil; and in His Exaltation we behold our own.[1] No vision of the future can surpass that which the Christian Church

[1] Appendix XIX.

has cherished from the beginning, that we shall all 'come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ . . . from Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.'

V

THEISM WITHOUT CHRIST

'Ye believe in God, believe also in Me.'—S. John xiv. 1.

'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.'—S. John xiv. 6.

'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.'—S. John xiv. 9.

'Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.'—Acts iv. 12.

'He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.'—2 S. John 9.

V

THEISM WITHOUT CHRIST

By Theism without Christ is not meant a system like Judaism or Mohammedanism, but a modern school which maintains that faith in God becomes weakened and impaired by being associated with faith in Jesus. There are those who cling with tenacity to the first article of the Apostles' Creed, 'I believe in God the Father Almighty,' but who reject with equal fervour the second article of the Creed, 'And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.' They resist with horror the suggestion that the world is under no overruling Providence, or that the humblest human being is not regarded with the tender love of the Infinite God: they rival the most

mystical worshipper in the ardour of the language with which in prayer they address the Father in Heaven, but they refuse to bow in the Name of Jesus: they go to the Father, as they think, without Him: they assert that to look to Him is virtually to look away from God. They are as hostile as we can be to the Substitutes for Christianity which we have been considering. They have no sympathy with those who loudly deny that there is a God, or with those who say that it is impossible to find out whether there is a God or not, or with those who think that the Creator and the Creation are one, that the universe is God, or with those who, not believing in any Unseen and Eternal God, insist that the proper object of the worship of mankind is man. In the proclamation of the existence of an All-Wise and All-holy Being, in the proclamation that He has made the world and rules it to its minutest detail, in the proclamation that

there is a life beyond the grave, they are the allies of the Christian Church. But then they go on to argue, For those who hold these doctrines, Christ is quite superfluous: to hold them in their purity Christ must be dethroned and His name no longer specially revered. Some may still wish to speak of Him as among the Great Teachers of the world, but some, in order to preserve these precious truths unmixed, decline in a very fanaticism of unbelief to assign Him even that position.

I

The declaration of our Lord, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me,' has been a chief stumbling-block and rock of offence. Are we to believe, it is asked, that only the comparatively few to whom the knowledge of Jesus Christ has come can possibly be accepted of the Father? When the words were spoken the number of His disciples was exceedingly small. Did he mean that the

Father could be approached only by that handful of people, that all beyond were banished from the Divine Presence and must inevitably perish? That this is what He meant both the friends and the foes of Christianity have at times been agreed in holding. The friends have imagined that they were thereby exalting the claim of Christ to be the One Mediator. It may be a terrible mystery that the vast majority of the human race should have no opportunity of believing in Him, should be even unacquainted with His Name. We can only bow before the inscrutable decree, and strive with all our might, not only that our own faith may be deepened, but that the knowledge of Christ may be diffused over all the earth, so that some here and there may be rescued. There is little wonder that such a view should have given rise to questionings and opposition, should have been rejected as inconsistent with mercy and with justice. It is an

interpretation on which hostile critics have laid stress as incontestably proving the narrowness and bigotry of the Christian Creed.

If we bear in mind Who it is that is presumed to say, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me,' the misconception disappears. It is not merely an individual man, separate from all others, giving Himself out as a wise and infallible Teacher. He Who makes the stupendous claim is One Who by the supposition embodies in Himself Human Nature in its perfection, Who is identified with His brethren, Who says, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.' The Life which He manifests is the Life of God. He is set forth as the Way to the Father: in mercy and in blessing the Way is disclosed in Him: it is not in harsh and rigid exclusiveness that He speaks, debarring the mass of mankind: it is in tender comprehensiveness, inviting all without distinction of race or circumstance, opening a new

and living way for all into the Holiest. It is the breaking down of all barriers between man and man, between man and God, not the setting up of another barrier high and insurmountable. When Christ declares 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me,' He is not declaring that the way is difficult and impassable, He is pointing out a way of deliverance which all may tread. So far from laying down a hard and burdensome dogma to be accepted on peril of pains and penalties, He is imparting a hope and a consolation in which all may rejoice.

If we believe Him to be the Word of God made Flesh, if we see in Him the Brightness of the Father's glory, it becomes a truism to say that only through Him can life and healing be imparted to mankind. When He Himself says, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life,' it is natural for Him to add, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.' It will

be granted by all who believe in God that, apart from God, no soul of man can have life eternal. The most strenuous advocate of the salvation of the virtuous heathen will grant that their salvation does not descend from the idol of wood and stone before which they grovel. It is from the True God, the Living God, that the blessing proceeds. It is His touch, His Spirit, His Presence which has consecrated the earnest though erring worship of the poor idolater. No one who believes in the Infinite and Eternal God could possibly say that the monstrous image whose aid is invoked by the devout heathen is itself the answerer of his prayer, the cause of his deliverance from sin, the bestower of immortality upon him. The utmost that can be said is that in the costly sacrifices, the painful penances, the passionate prayers which he presents to the object of his adoration, the Almighty Love discerns a longing after something nobler and better,

and accepts the service as directed really, though unconsciously, to Him.

> The feeble hands and helpless,
> Groping blindly in the darkness,
> Touch God's right hand in that darkness
> And are lifted up and strengthened.[1]

But it is the hand of God that they touch. It is from the One Omnipotent God that every blessing comes: it is the One Omnipotent God Who turns to truth and life and reality every sincere and struggling and imperfect attempt to serve Him on the part of those who know not His Nature or His Name.

And what is true of God is equally true of Christ, the manifestation of God. Only grant Him to be the Incarnate Word of God, and it becomes plain that salvation can no more exist apart from Him than apart from the Father. This Word of God is the Light that lighteth every man. Whatever truth, whatever knowledge of the Divine, anywhere

[1] Longfellow, *Song of Hiawatha.*

exists is the result of that illumination. The sparks which shine even in the darkness of heathendom betoken the presence of that Light, not wholly extinguished by the folly and ignorance of man. That is the One Sun of Righteousness which gives light everywhere, though in many places the clouds are so dense that the beams can scarcely penetrate. Now, if that Word has become Flesh, if that Light has become embodied in Human Form, we are still constrained to say, There is no true Light but His, it is in His Light that all must walk if they would not stray, there is no Guide, no Deliverer, save Him. Christ discloses, brings to view, all the saving health which has ever been, all the power of restoring, cleansing, healing, which has ever worked in the souls of men. The one Power by which any human being, in any age or in any land, has ever been fitted for the presence of the All Holy God, is made manifest in Christ. 'Neither is there

salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.'

We need have no hesitation in asserting that all who in any age or in any land, or in any religion, have come to the Father must have come through the Son of Man, the Eternal Word made Flesh. We do not contend, as has too frequently been contended, that beyond the limits of Christianity, beyond, it may be, the limits of one section of Christianity, there is no truth believed, no acceptable service rendered. We hail with gratitude the lofty thoughts and the noble achievements of some who do not in word acknowledge Christ as Lord. In the vision of the Light that lighteth every man, we see

> How light can find its way
> To regions farthest from the fount of day.[1]

'Now,' as is well said by the present Bishop

[1] Keble, *Christian Year*.

of Birmingham, who will hardly be accused of any tendency to minimise the claims of Christianity, 'this is no narrow creed. Christianity, the religion of Jesus, is the Light: it is the one final Revelation, the one final Religion, but it supersedes all other religions, Jewish and Pagan, not by excluding, but by including all the elements of truth which each contained. There was light in Zoroastrianism, light in Buddhism, light among the Greeks: but it is all included in Christianity. A good Christian is a good Buddhist, a good Jew, a good Mohammedan, a good Zoroastrian; that is, he has all the truth and virtue that these can possess, purged and fused in a greater and completer light. Christianity, I say, supersedes all other religions by including these fragments of truth in its own completeness. You cannot show me any element of spiritual light or strength which is in other religions and is not in Christianity. Nor can you

show me any other religion which can compare with Christianity in completeness of light: Christianity is the one complete and final religion, and the elements of truth in other religions are rays of the One Light which is concentrated and shines full in Jesus Christ our Lord.' [1]

II

From whatever cause, whether as a reaction against the mode in which this great truth has been at times presented, there have been, and there are, attempts to supersede Christianity because of its narrowness. Religion must not be identified with any one name: God manifests Himself to all, and no Mediator is needed. Theism, therefore, the worship of the One Almighty and Eternal Being, not Christianity, in which a Human Name is associated with the Divine Name, can alone pretend to be the Universal Religion, the

[1] Bishop Gore, *The Christian Creed.*

Religion of all Mankind. It is not the first time that such an attempt to do without Christianity and to do away with it has been made. In the eighteenth century there was a similar movement. To this day at Ferney, near Geneva, is preserved the chapel which Voltaire erected for the worship of God, of God as distinguished from Christ as Divine or as Mediator between God and man. Voltaire thought that he could overthrow and crush the Faith of Christ, but he none the less erected a temple to God. The Deists upheld what they called the Religion of Nature and repudiated Revelation. *Christianity not Mysterious*; *Christianity as old as the Creation*, were among the works issued to show the superiority of Natural Religion, its freedom from difficulties, its agreement with reason, its universality. The most enduring memorial of the controversy is Bishop Butler's *Analogy of Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature*,

in which it was argued that the Natural Religion of the Deists was beset by as many difficulties as the Revelation of the Christians, that those who were not hindered from believing in God by the problems which Nature presented need not be staggered by the problems which were presented by Christianity. Bishop Butler's argument was directed against a special set of antagonists, an argument, it may be said, of little avail against the scepticism of the present day. The argument seems to have been unanswerable by those to whom it was addressed. The grounds on which they rejected the Revelation of Christ were shown to be inadequate. When they accepted this or that article of Natural Religion, they had accepted what was as difficult of belief as this or that part of the Revelation which they rejected. The mysteries which existed in the religion with which they would have nothing to do were in harmony with the

mysteries which existed in the religion which they declared to be necessary for the welfare of society. That retort may be made with even more effect to those who so far occupy that same ground to-day. They rejoice to believe that there is a God, that He is not far off, that He communicates Himself to their souls, that the love which we bear to one another is but a faint image of the love which He bears to us, that the noblest qualities which exist in us exist more purely, more gloriously in Him, that we are in very deed His children and are called to manifest His likeness. It is by prayer, both in public and in private, both in congregations and alone with the Alone, that His Love and His Help can be comprehended and used. He is no absent God: His Ear is not heavy that it cannot hear, nor His arm shortened that it cannot save. With this belief we, as Christians, have no dispute: we gladly go along with Theists in asserting it: we

only wonder at their unwillingness to go along with us a little further. For if God be such as they glowingly depict Him, if our relations to Him be such as they esteem it our greatest dignity to know, there is nothing antecedently impossible in the thought that One Man has heard His Voice more clearly, has surrendered to His Will more entirely, than any other in the history of the ages and the races of mankind: nothing antecedently impossible in the thought that to One Man His Truth has been conveyed more brightly, more fully than to any other; that in One Man the lineaments of the Divine Image may be seen more distinctly than in any other. If God be such, and if our relations to God be such, as Theists describe, why should they shrink with distrust or with antipathy from a Son of Man Who has borne witness to those truths in His Life and in His Death with a steadfastness of conviction which none other has ever surpassed; Who, according

to the records which we possess of Him, habitually lived to do the Father's Will and died commending His Spirit into the Father's Hands: a Son of Man Who could truly be said to be in heaven while He was on earth? If God be such, and our relations to God be such, as Theists describe, would not that Son of Man be the confirmation of their thoughts? Would not His testimony be of infinite value on their side? Would He Himself not be the radiant illustration, the eagerly longed for proof of the truth for which they contend? They believe in God: why should it, on their own showing, be so hard to believe in Christ?

III

The Theism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is in some respects different from the Deism of the eighteenth. It is not so cold, the God in whom it believes is not so distant from His creatures. But it is not

less vehement in its depreciation of Christianity as a needless and even harmful addition to the Religion of Nature. Conspicuous among the advocates of this modern Theism have been Francis William Newman, Miss Frances Power Cobbe, and the Rev. Charles Voysey.

Francis Newman, in his youth, belonged, like his brother the famous Cardinal, to the strictest sect of Evangelicals, but, like the Cardinal also, drifted away from them, though in a totally different direction.[1] As he found the untenableness of certain views which he had cherished, the insufficiency of certain arguments which he had employed, he came with much anguish of mind to the conclusion that the whole fabric of historical Christianity was built upon the sand. He rapidly renounced belief after belief, and caused widespread distress and dismay by a crude attack upon the moral perfection of

[1] Appendix XX.

our Lord. His conviction that Christianity had nothing special to say for itself, and that one religion was as good as another, seems to have been mainly brought about by a discussion which he had with a Mohammedan carpenter at Aleppo. 'Among other matters, I was particularly desirous of disabusing him of the current notion of his people that our Gospels are spurious narratives of late date. I found great difficulty of expression, but the man listened to me with much attention, and I was encouraged to exert myself. He waited patiently till I had done and then spoke to the following effect: "I will tell you, sir, how the case stands. God has given to you English many good gifts. You make fine ships, and sharp penknives, and good cloth and cottons, and you have rich nobles and brave soldiers; and you write and print many learned books (dictionaries and grammars): all this is of God. But there is one thing that God has withheld

from you and has revealed to us; and that is the knowledge of the true religion by which one may be saved."' [1]

But although Newman was led to give up Christianity, and practically to hold that one religion was as good as another, he clung tenaciously to what he supposed to be common to all religions, belief in God, a belief deep and ardent. The rationalism of the Deists did not approve itself to him. 'Our Deists of past centuries tried to make religion a matter of the pure intellect, and thereby halted at the very frontier of the inward life: they cut themselves off even from all acquaintance with the experience of spiritual men.' [2] He nourished his soul with psalms and hymns: he sought communion with God. He saw the weakness of Morality without the inspiring power of Religion. 'Morals can seldom gain living energy without the impulsive force derived from Spirituals. . . . However

[1] *Phases of Faith.* [2] *The Soul: its Sorrows and Aspirations.*

much Plato and Cicero may talk of the surpassing beauty of virtue, still virtue is an abstraction, a set of wise rules, not a Person, and cannot call out affection as an existence exterior to the soul does. On the contrary, God is a *Person*; and the love of Him is of all affections by far the most energetic in exciting us to make good our highest ideals of moral excellence and in clearing the moral sight, so that that ideal may keep rising. Other things being equal (a condition not to be forgotten) a spiritual man will hold a higher and purer morality than a mere moralist. Not only does Duty manifest itself to him as an ever-expanding principle, but since a larger and larger part of Duty becomes pleasant and easy when performed under the stimulus of Love, the Will is enabled to concentrate itself more on that which remains difficult and greater power of performance is attained.' [1] Where shall we find a more

[1] *The Soul: its Sorrows and Aspirations.*

vivid or more spiritual description of the rise and progress of devotion in the soul than in the words of this man, who placed himself beyond the pale of every Christian communion? 'One who begins to realise God's majestic beauty and eternity and feels in contrast how little and transitory man is, how dependent and feeble, longs to lean upon him for support. But He is *outside* of the heart, like a beautiful sunset, and seems to have nothing to do with it: there is no getting into contact with Him, to press against Him. Yet where rather should the weak rest than on the strong, the creature of the day than on the Eternal, the imperfect than on the Centre of Perfection? And where else should God dwell than in the human heart? for if God is in the universe, among things inanimate and unmoral, how much more ought He to dwell with our souls! and they, too, seem to be infinite in their cravings: who but He can satisfy them? Thus a restless

instinct agitates the soul, guiding it dimly to feel that it was made for some definite but unknown relation towards God. The sense of emptiness increases to positive uneasiness, until there is an inward yearning, if not shaped in words, yet in substance not alien from that ancient strain, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God; my soul is athirst for God, even for the Living God."'[1]

Mr. Newman, in his later days, we understand, had modified the bitterness of his opposition to historical Christianity and was ready to avow himself as a disciple of Christ.

Miss Frances Power Cobbe was another devout spirit who, with less violence but equal decisiveness, accepted Theism as apart from Christianity. In her case, even more visibly than in Mr. Newman's, it was not Christianity which she rejected, but sundry distortions of it with which it had in her mind become

[1] *The Soul.*

identified. She wrote not a few articles so permeated with the Christian spirit and imbued with the Christian hope that the most ardent believer in Christ could read them with entire approval and own himself their debtor. She took an active part in many philanthropic movements, and she was an earnest and eloquent advocate of faith in the Divine Ordering of the world and in human immortality.

'Theism,' she said, 'is not Christianity *minus* Christ, nor Judaism *minus* the miraculous legation of Moses, nor any other creed whatsoever merely stripped of its supernatural element. It is before all things the positive affirmation of the Absolute Goodness of God: and if it be in antagonism to other creeds, it is principally because of, and in proportion to, their failure to assert that Goodness in its infinite and all-embracing completeness.'[1] 'God is over us, and heaven

[1] *Alone to the Alone.*

is waiting for us all the same, even though all the men of science in Europe unite to tell us there is only matter in the universe and only corruption in the grave. Atheism may prevail for a night, but faith cometh in the morning. Theism is "bound to win" at last: not necessarily that special type of Theism which our poor thoughts in this generation have striven to define: but that great fundamental faith, the needful substruction of every other possible religious faith, the faith in a Righteous and Loving God, and in a Life of man beyond the tomb.' [1]

'All the monitions of conscience, all the guidance and rebukes and consolations of the Divine Spirit, all the holy words of the living, and all the sacred books of the dead, these are our primary Evidences of Religion. In a word, the first article of our creed is "I BELIEVE IN GOD THE HOLY GHOST." After this fundamental dogma, we accept

[1] *Alone to the Alone.*

with joy and comfort the faith in the Creator and Orderer of the physical universe, and believe in GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH. And lastly we rejoice in the knowledge that (in no mystic Athanasian sense, but in simple fact) "*these two are One.*" The God of Love and Justice Who speaks in conscience, and Whom our inmost hearts adore, is the same God Who rolls the suns and guides the issues of life and death.' [1]

In an able paper, *A Faithless World*, in which Miss Cobbe combated the assertion of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, that the disappearance of belief in God and Immortality would be unattended with any serious consequences to the material, intellectual, or moral well-being of mankind, she forcibly said, 'I confess at starting on this inquiry, that the problem, "Is religion of use, or can we do as well without it?" seems to me

[1] *Alone to the Alone.*

almost as grotesque as the old story of the woman who said that we owe vast obligations to the moon, which affords us light on dark nights, whereas we are under no such debt to the sun, who only shines by day, *when there is always light.* Religion has been to us so diffused a light that it is quite possible to forget how we came by the general illumination, save when now and then it has blazed out with special brightness.' The comment is eminently just, but does it not apply with equal force to Miss Cobbe herself? The Theism which she professed was the direct outcome of Christianity, could never have existed but for Christianity, was, in all its best features, simply Christianity under a different name.

That Theism, as a separate organisation, gives little evidence of conquering the world is shown by the fact that, after many years, it boasts of only one congregation, that of the Theistic Church, Swallow Street, Picca-

dilly, of which the Rev. Charles Voysey is minister. Mr. Voysey was at one time vicar of a parish in Yorkshire, where he issued, under the title of *The Sling and the Stone*, sermons attacking the commonly accepted doctrines of the Church of England, and was in consequence deprived of his living. He is distinctly anti-Christian in his teaching; strongly prejudiced against anything that bears the Christian name: criticising the sayings and doings of our Lord in a fashion which indicates either the most astonishing misconception or the most melancholy perversion. But his sincerity and fervour on behalf of Theism are unmistakable. He describes it as *Religion for all mankind, based on facts which are never in Dispute.* The book which is called by that title is written for the help and comfort of all his fellow-men, 'chiefly for those who have doubted and discarded the Christian Religion, and in consequence have become Agnostics or

Pessimists.' It is prefaced by a dedication, which is also a touching confession of personal faith: 'In all humility I dedicate this book to my God Who made me and all mankind, Who loves us all alike with an everlasting love, Who of His very faithfulness causeth us to be troubled, Who punishes us justly for every sin, not in anger or vengeance, but only to cleanse, to heal, and to bless, in Whose Everlasting Arms we lie now and to all eternity.' [1]

Mr. Voysey has compiled a Prayer Book for the use of his congregation. The ordinary service is practically the morning or evening service of the Book of Common Prayer, with all references to our Lord carefully eliminated. The hymn *Jesus, Lover of my Soul* is changed to *Father, Refuge of my Soul*; and the hymn

> Just as I am without one plea,
> But that Thy blood was shed for me,
> And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
> O Lamb of God, I come,

[1] Appendix XXI.

is rendered:

> Just as I am without one plea,
> But that Thy love is seeking me,
> And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
> O loving God, I come.

The service respecting our duty, and the service of supplication have merits of their own, but, except for the wanton omission of the Name which is above every name, there is nothing in them which does not bear a Christian impress. 'Christianity *minus* Christ' would seem to be no unfair definition of their standpoint: and without Christ they could not have been what they are. The Father Who is set forth as the Object of worship and of trust is the Father Whom Christ declared, the Father Who, but for the manifestation of Christ, would never have been known. Far be it from us to deny that the Father has been found by those who have sought Him beyond the limits of the Church: this only we affirm that those by whom He

has been found, have, consciously or unconsciously, drawn near to Him by the way of Christ. Nothing of value in modern Theism is incompatible with Christianity: nothing of value which would not be strengthened by faith in Him Who said, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.'

IV

The strange objection to faith in Christ is sometimes made that it interferes with faith in the Father. The notion of mediation is regarded as derogatory alike to God and to man. There is no need for any one to come between: no need for God to depute another to bear witness of Him: no need for us to depute Another to secure His favour, as from all eternity He is Love. The assumption, the groundless assumption, underlying this conception is that the Mediator is a barrier between man and God, a hindrance not a help to fellowship with the Divine: that one

goes to the Mediator because access to God is debarred. Whatever may occasionally have been the unguarded statements of representatives of Christianity, it is surely plain that no such doctrine is taught, that the very opposite of such doctrine is taught, in the New Testament. 'We do not,' says M. Sabatier, 'address ourselves to Jesus by way of dispensing ourselves from going to the Father. Far from this, we go to Christ and abide in Him, precisely that we may find the Father. We abide in Him that His filial consciousness may become our own; that the Spirit may become our spirit, and that God may dwell immediately in us as He dwells in Him. Nothing in all this carries us outside of the religion of the Spirit: on the contrary, it is its seal and confirmation.'

The whole object of the work of Christ, as proclaimed by Himself, or as interpreted

[1] *The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit.*

by His Apostles, was to show the Father, to bring men to the Father. 'Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.' He 'came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.' To argue that to come to Christ is a substitute for coming to God, is an inducement to halt upon the way, is an absolute travesty and perversion. To refuse to see the glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ is not to bring God near: it is to remove Him further from our vision. That God should come to us, that we should go to God, through a mediator, is only in accordance with a universal law. 'Why,' says one, who might be expected from his theological training to speak otherwise, 'Why, *all* knowledge is "mediated" even of

the simplest objects, even of the most obvious facts: there is no such thing in the world as *im*mediate knowledge, and shall we demur when we are told that the knowledge of God the Father also must pass, in order to reach us at its best and purest, through the medium of "that Son of God and Son of Man in Whom was the fulness of the prophetic spirit and the filial life?" . . . Of this at least I feel convinced, that where faith in the Father has grown blurred and vague in our days, and finally flickered out, the cause must in many instances be sought—I will not say in the wilful rejection, but—in the careless letting go of the message and Personality of the Son.'[1] So far from the thought of the Father being ignored or set aside by the thought of Christ, we may rather say with S. John, 'Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also.' 'He

[1] J. Warschauer, *Coming of Christ.*

that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.'

The homage that we render Thee
Is still our Father's own;
Nor jealous claim or rivalry
Divides the Cross and Throne.[1]

V

The notion that Theism as contrasted with Christianity is a mark of progress and of spirituality is a pure imagination. 'More spiritual it may be than the traditional Christianity which consists in rigid and stereotyped forms of practice, of ceremonial, of observance, of dogma: but not more spiritual than the teaching of Christ Himself, the end and completion of Whose work was to bring men to the Father, to teach them that God is a Spirit, and to send the Spirit of the Father into the hearts of the disciples. It would be a strange perversity if men should reject Christ in the name of spiritual

[1] Whittier, *Our Master.*

religion when it is to Christ, and to Him alone, that they owe the conception of what spiritual religion is.'[1] To preach the doctrines of Theism without reference to Christ is to deprive them of their most sublime illustration, their most inspiring force, and their most convincing proof.

It is as Christ is known that God is believed in. The attempt to create enthusiasm for God while banishing the Gospel of Christ meets with astonishingly small response. The 'Religion for all Mankind' makes but little progress, is, in spite of the labours of five-and-thirty years, confined, as we have seen, almost to a solitary moderately sized congregation. And whether or not the 'facts' on which the religion is based 'are never in dispute,' the religion itself is oftentimes disputed very keenly. Modern assaults upon religious faith are, as a rule, directed quite as much against Theism as

[1] R. E. Bartlett, *The Letter and the Spirit*: Bampton Lecture.

against Christianity.[1] It is the Love, or even the existence, of the Living God, it is human responsibility, it is life beyond the grave, that are called in question as frequently as the Resurrection of Christ. The assurance that God at sundry times and in divers manners has spoken by prophets renders it not more but less improbable that He should speak by a Son: the assurance that there is life beyond the grave for all renders it not more but less improbable that Jesus rose from the dead. Conversely those who believe in Jesus believe with a double intensity in Him Whom He revealed. 'Ye believe in God,' said Christ, 'believe also in Me.' For many of us now, it is because we believe in Christ that we believe also in God. The Almighty and Eternal is beyond our ken: the grace and truth of Jesus Christ come home to our hearts. The Word that was in the beginning with God and was God,

[1] Appendix XXII.

is wrapt in impenetrable mystery: the Word made Flesh can be seen and handled: has

> wrought
> With human hands the Creed of Creeds
> In loveliness of perfect deeds,
> More strong than all poetic thought.[1]

And however it may be in a few exceptional cases, where people nominally renouncing Christ desperately cleave to a fragment of the faith of their childhood, the fact remains that, where He ceases to be acknowledged, faith in the Father Whom He manifested tends, gradually or speedily, to vanish.

VI

The superiority of Theism to Deism simply consists in its being more Christian. With the ideas of God which 'Theists' hold, we can, as Christians, most cordially sympathise. We can sincerely say, 'Hold to them firmly, they are your life: let no man rob you of

[1] Tennyson, *In Memoriam.*

them by any vain deceit.' But we cannot help also asking, 'Whence have you drawn those lofty ideas? where have you obtained so exalted a conception of the Divine Being in His mingled Majesty and lowliness, in His inconceivable greatness, and His equally inconceivable compassion? We turn from the picture of God which, with so much labour, so much skill, so much moral earnestness, you have exhibited, and we behold the Original in Christ and His Teaching. However unconsciously, it is His Truth, it is His Features, that you have reproduced. You have been brought up in the Church of Christ, or you have been brought into contact with its influences, and you have imbibed its teachings, perhaps more deeply than some who would not dare to question its smallest precepts. Still, Christ's teaching you have not outgrown, from Christ Himself you have not escaped. You cannot go from His presence or flee from His Spirit. Those

views which you hold so strongly, which are to you the most ennobling that have ever been given of God and of religion, where is it that alone they are to be found? In places where Christianity has gone before.

No doubt, belief in God is not confined to Christian countries: worship of the Maker of heaven and earth exists where the name of Christ has never been heard, but not *such* belief, *such* worship, as that for which those persons contend. The God Whom they adore will not be found anywhere save where Christianity has penetrated. In this country it is the desperate clinging to one portion of the Christian Faith when all else has been abandoned: in other lands, in India, for example, where representatives of this way of thinking are not uncommon, it is the rapturous welcome of one of the sublime truths of Christianity before which the idolatries of their forefathers are passing away. It is safe to call it a transition stage:

it will either part with the fragment of Christianity which it retains and become merged in doubt and speculation and unbelief; or it will include yet more of the Christianity of which it has grasped a part: its belief in God will be crowned and confirmed by its belief in Christ.

For, speaking to those who cherish faith in the All-Righteous and All-Loving God as the only hope for the regeneration of mankind, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that where faith in Christ fades, faith in God has a tendency to become vague and dim. He ceases to be thought of as a Friend and Help at hand: He is resolved into a Creator infinitely distant or into a Law, unmovable, inexorable, a blind, unconscious Fate. It is Christ Who gives life to the thought of God. It is the Word made Flesh that makes the Eternal Word more real. The attempt of the Deists to purify religion by the preaching of a God who had not

revealed Himself, and could not reveal Himself, in a Son, came to nothing. Voltaire's chapel at Ferney still stands, but nobody worships in it. Religion seemed to slumber: belief in God seemed to be decaying, when the preaching of the name and the work of Christ again aroused it into life. And so it is now. Whatever the ability, whatever the sincerity of the advocates of belief in God without reference to Christ, it lacks motive-power, it lacks the missionary spirit. If we may judge by the past, Theism without Christ is a faith which will not spread, which will not lay hold on the labouring and the heavy laden: which may be maintained as a theory, but which will not be as a fire in the souls of men diffusing itself by kindling other souls. It is from Christ alone, from Christ the manifestation of what God is in Heart and Mind, from Christ the manifestation of what man ought to be, from Christ Who said, 'In My Father's house are many

mansions: he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,' that there comes with an authority to which, in face of the difficulties besetting the present and the future, the human soul will bow, with a soothing power to which the human spirit will gladly yield—it is from Christ alone that there comes the Divine injunction, 'Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me.' It is as He is clearly seen and truly known that the clouds of error and superstition vanish from the Face of God, and men are drawn to worship and to trust.

THE TRIBUTE OF CRITICISM TO CHRIST

'For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.'—DEUTERONOMY xxxii. 31.

'He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias or one of the prophets.'—S. MATTHEW xvi. 13, 14.

'What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?'—S. MATTHEW, xxii. 42.

'And there was much murmuring among the people concerning Him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people.'—S. JOHN vii. 12.

'Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.'—S. JOHN vi. 67, 68.

VI

THE TRIBUTE OF CRITICISM TO CHRIST [1]

Of the investigations of modern criticism the most serious are those which have concerned the person of our Lord. It has been felt both by assailants and by defenders of the Faith that, so long as His supremacy remains acknowledged, Christianity has not been overthrown. Other doctrines once considered all-important may fall into comparative abeyance: whether they are upheld or rejected or modified, matters little to Christianity as Christianity. But more and more it has grown clear that Christ Himself

[1] In this Lecture are included some paragraphs from a sermon long out of print, *The Witness of Scepticism to Christ*, preached before the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale.

is the Article of a standing or a falling Church. If this doctrine is not of God, if He is not the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Christianity, whatever benefits may have been associated with its career, must be ranked among religions which have passed away. But so long as He is admitted to be the Authority and standard in the moral and spiritual realm, so long as His name is above every name, the work of destruction is not accomplished.

Hence, renewed attempts have of late been made to tear the crown from His brow, to reduce Him to the level of common men, to relegate Him to the domain of myth, even to deny that He ever existed. Although, in certain quarters at present, this last and extreme position is loudly asserted, it is hardly necessary to occupy much time in examining it, the trend of all criticism, even of the most rationalistic, being so decidedly opposed to

it. To deny that He existed is commonly felt to be the outcome of the most arbitrary prejudice, the conclusions of Whately's *Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon Buonaparte* remaining grave and weighty in comparison. That Jesus of Nazareth lived and taught and was crucified, that, immediately after His Death, His disciples were proclaiming that He had risen, and was their living inspiration, these are facts which can be denied only by the very extravagance of scepticism. And the admission of these simple facts implies a great deal more than is commonly supposed.

I

It is the fashion for hostile critics to say, 'Christianity is not dependent upon Christ: it is the creation of the semi-historical Paul, not of the unhistorical Jesus. There is at best no more connection between Christendom and Christ than between America and

Amerigo Vespucci.[1] See how much Christians have been obliged to give up: see how belief after belief has had to be surrendered; see how they are now left with the merest fragment of their ancient Creed, how evidently they will soon be compelled to part with the little to which they still desperately cling.' The conclusion is somewhat hasty and premature. The fragment which remains is after all the main portion of the Creed of the early disciples. Where that fragment is declared and held and lived in, there is the presence and the power of the Christian Faith. We need not trouble ourselves about sundry points which, at one epoch or another, have come to be denied or ignored: we need not say anything either for them or against them. We have to take our stand on what is accepted, not on what is rejected. And for the moment we may

[1] G. Lommel, *Jesus von Nazareth* (quoted in Pfannmüller's *Jesus im Urteil der Jahrhunderte*).

venture to take our stand only on what is accepted by the critics least biassed in favour of the traditional views of Christendom. Those who have come to imagine it to be a mark of advanced culture to break with all religion, to confine their attention to the fleeting present, to reject all that claims to have Divine sanction, may listen with respect to the words of some who appear in fancied hostility to Christianity.

We are not assuming that because men are great in Science or History or Philosophy they must be great in spiritual things. Their achievements in their own sphere, let us gratefully recognise; their uprightness, their single-heartedness, let us imitate; and if by chance they are sincere Christians as well as able men, let us rejoice; if they are not professing Christians at all and yet bear witness to the beneficial influence of Christianity and the unique power of the words and character of Christ, let us hail with

pleasure their tribute of admiration as a testimony impartial and unanswerable to the pre-eminence of our Lord, but let not our faith in God, our knowledge of our Saviour, be dependent on their verdict. The Faith of the Gospel does not stand or fall with their approval or disapproval. In matters of criticism we do well to defer to scholars, in matters of science we do well to defer to men of science. But in matters pertaining to the inner life, to the development of character, to the knowledge of things pure and lovely and of good report, such men have no exclusive claim to be listened to. And it would be absurd to say that we cannot make up our minds as to whether Christ is worthy to be revered and loved and followed until we have ascertained what is said about Him by authorities in physics, or geology, or astronomy, by statesmen or novelists or writers of magazine articles, by inventors of ingenious machines or authors of sensa-

tional stories. If they speak scoffingly, if they do not recognise any sacredness in His Spirit and Life, it will be impossible for us to take Him as our Moral and Spiritual Guide.

We might almost as well say that we will not trust the truthfulness or goodness of our father or mother or brother or friend of many years, unless, from persons eminent in literature or science or politics, we have testimonials assuring us that our affection for those with whom we are so closely associated is not a delusion. That is a matter, we should all feel, with which the great and distinguished, however justly great and distinguished, have really nothing to do. It is a matter for ourselves, a matter in which our own experience is worth more than the verdict of people, however learned in their own line, who do not, and cannot, know the friend or relative as we know him ourselves. Still, we regard it as an additional

compliment to his worth, and an additional confirmation of our own faith, if those who have been jealously scrutinising his conduct declare that they can find no fault in him.[1]

If it is made plain that the positive teaching of men unconnected with any Church, untrammelled by any creed, is a virtual assertion of much that is most dear to Christianity, if it is made plain that even where there is strong denial there is also much reference to Christ, it may have more weight than the most cogent arguments or the most glowing appeals of orthodox divines or devout believers. The Evangelists delight to record instances of unexpected, unfriendly, unimpeachable testimony to the power of Christ. It is not only that the simple-minded people were astonished at His doctrine, but that the soldiers who were sent to silence Him re-

[1] Appendix XXIII.

turned, smitten with amazement, saying, 'Never man spake like this Man.' It is not only that a grateful penitent washed His Feet with tears, but that the unprincipled governor who sentenced Him to death declared 'I find in Him no fault at all.' It is not only that an Apostle confesses, 'Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God,' but that the centurion who watched over His Crucifixion exclaimed, 'Certainly this was a Righteous Man: this was a Son of God.' It is similar unprejudiced witness that we may hear around us still, the witness of those who profess to have another rule of life than ours, and to be in no degree influenced by our traditions. We must not expect too much from this kind of evidence: we must not expect clear logical proof of every article rightly or wrongly identified with the popularly termed 'orthodox' Creed. It would destroy the value of the evidence

simply to quote orthodox doctrines in orthodox language. What we rather offer is the testimony of those who have resigned their grasp on much that we may deem essential. It is because in a sense we may call them 'enemies' that we ask them to be 'judges' in the great controversy. It is exactly because they are incredulous, or sceptical, or irreligious that we cite them at all. We confine ourselves to the utterances of men who are commonly cited as hostile to the commonly accepted Faith of Christ, or who do not rank among the number of His nominal disciples, or who at least have discussed His claims by critical and historical methods, endeavouring fairly to take into account all the facts which the circumstances warrant. We say to those who disown the authority of Christ: It is not to the words of Evangelists or preachers that your attention is sought: it is to the words of those whom you

profess to respect, of those because of whose supposed antagonism to Christianity you are rejecting Him. We ask you to listen to them and to consider whether He of Whom such men speak in such terms is to be so lightly set aside as you have fancied.

II

It will be strange if, accepting even that scanty creed, we do not find ourselves speedily accepting much more. When it is heartily acknowledged that Jesus of Nazareth lived and died, and that His first followers found strength and irresistible power in the conviction that He had conquered death and the grave, it is of necessity that we go further. The extreme sceptics who maintain that He never existed are, for the purpose of controversy, wise in their generation, for, once His existence is admitted, His mysterious power begins to tell. We are confronted

with an Influence by which, consciously or unconsciously, we must be affected, a knowledge which we must acquire, an Authority to which we must bow. Let us not think merely of those who have, in utter devotion, yielded their hearts and souls to Him through all the centuries, of the institutions and customs which owe their existence directly to Him; let us think of the manifestations which are so often visible in those who do not suspect whence the manifestations come, let us think of the tributes of affection, of homage, of devotion which are paid by those to whom the ancient faith in His Divinity appears to be an illusion or an impossible exaggeration.

Scarcely any critic of recent years has been regarded as more destructive than Professor Schmiedel. Indignant attack after indignant attack has been made upon him for arguing that only nine sayings attributed to our Lord can be accepted as genuine, that

all else is involved in suspicion. What Schmiedel really does maintain is that these nine sayings must of necessity be accepted as genuine, cannot be rejected by any sane canon of criticism, and that the acceptance of these nine sayings, these 'foundation-pillars,' compels the acceptance of a great deal besides. '*What then have I gained in these nine foundation pillars?* You will perhaps say "Very little": I reply, "I have gained just enough." Having them, I know that Jesus must really have come forward in the way He is said to have done. . . . In a word, I know, on the one hand, that His Person cannot be referred to the region of myth; on the other hand, that He was man in the full sense of the term, and that, without of course denying that the Divine character was in Him, this could be found only in the shape in which it can be found in any human being. I think, therefore, that if we knew no more we should

know by no means little about Him. But as a matter of fact the foundation-pillars are but the starting-point for our study of the life of Jesus.' [1] And this study, he concludes, gives us nothing less than 'pretty well the whole bulk of Jesus' teaching, in so far as its object is to explain in a purely religious and ethical way what God requires of man and wherein man requires comfort and consolation from God.' The standpoint of Professor Schmiedel is not the standpoint of the Church as a whole: he fearlessly and aggressively endeavours to remove any misconception on that subject: all the more remarkable that, renouncing so much, he incontrovertibly establishes so much, incontrovertibly establishes, we may not unreasonably contend, a great deal more than he admits: he cannot, we may think, stop logically where he does. All this may, or may not, be legitimately argued: there can

[1] *Jesus in Modern Criticism.*

be no doubt that one whose dislike of traditional dogmas is excessive, and whose scrutiny of the Gospel records is minute and unsparing, forces us to say of Jesus, What manner of Man is this ?

It is the same with the general tendency of modern criticism. From the day that Strauss accomplished his destructive work, the Figure of Jesus as a Historical Reality has been more and more endowed with power.[1] No age has so occupied itself with Him, none has so endeavoured to recall the features of His character, to apply His teachings to the solution of social questions, as this age of ruthless inquiry. The inquirers may have abjured tradition, but almost without exception they have profoundly reverenced, if they have not actually worshipped, Jesus of Nazareth, and they have found in His Gospel moral and spiritual light and life.

[1] H. Weinel, *Jesus im neunzehnten Jahrhundert.*

Some thirty years ago, M. André Lefèvre, a fervid disciple of Materialism, an uncompromising and bitter opponent of every symptom of religious manifestation, could not help discerning 'with the clairvoyance of hatred,' the influence of Christianity in modern thought. 'Descartes, Leibnitz, Locke, Condillac, Newton, Bonnet, Kant, Hegel, Spinoza himself, Toland and Priestley, Rousseau, all are Christians somewhere. . . . Voltaire himself has not completely eliminated the virus: his Deism is not exempt from it.' [1] The same thing is still occurring. In the most unexpected quarters we find the fascination of Christ remaining. Men not acknowledging themselves to be His followers, defiantly proclaiming that they are not His followers, that they can hardly be even interested in Him, are yet perpetually returning, in what they themselves will confess as their higher moments, to the thought of

[1] Quoted in E. Naville, *Le Témoignage du Christ.*

Him, trying to make plain why it is that for them there is in Him no beauty that they should desire Him. For example, this is how Mr. H. G. Wells, the popular author of so many imaginative works, attempts frankly to explain his attitude:

'I hope I shall offend no susceptibilities when I assert that this great and very definite Personality in the hearts and imaginations of mankind does not, and never has, attracted me. It is a fact I record about myself without aggression or regret. I do not find myself able to associate him in any way with the emotion of salvation.' But Mr. Wells goes on to say: 'I admit the splendid imaginative appeal in the idea of a divine human friend and mediator. If it were possible to have access by prayer, by meditation, by urgent outcries of the soul, to such a being whose feet were in the darknesses, who stooped down from the light, who was at once great and little, limitless in power

and virtue, and one's very brother; if it were possible by sheer will in believing to make and make one's way to such a helper, who would refuse such help? But I do not find such a being in Christ. I do not find, I cannot imagine such a being. I wish I could. To me the Christian Christ seems not so much a humanised God as an incomprehensibly sinless being, neither God nor man. His sinlessness wears his incarnation like a fancy dress, all his white self unchanged. He had no petty weaknesses. Now the essential trouble of my life is its petty weaknesses. If I am to have that love, that sense of understanding fellowship which is, I conceive, the peculiar magic and merit of this idea of a Personal Saviour, then I need some one quite other than this image of virtue, this terrible and incomprehensible Galilean with his crown of thorns, his bloodstained hands and feet. I cannot love him any more than I can love a man

upon the rack.' 'The Christian's Christ is too fine for me, not incarnate enough, not flesh enough, not earth enough. He was never foolish and hot-eared and inarticulate, never vain, he never forgot things, nor tangled his miracles.'[1]

There is no disputing about tastes; and it is impossible to refute one who tells us that he cannot see and cannot understand, though we may lament and be astonished at his disabilities. Why a man upon the rack should not be loved, or why the prime qualification for the Saviour of mankind should be the plentiful possession of petty weaknesses, or why it should be necessary for Him to be sometimes foolish and to have a bad memory, or what necessary connection there is between hot-ears and the salvation of the world, need not detain us long. For in spite of this apparently curious longing for a Deliverer who shall be weak and vain

[1] *First and Last Things: a Confession of Faith and Rule of Life.*

and forgetful and hot-eared, and foolish, and of the earth earthy, Mr. Wells shows us that the urgent outcry of his soul is for a Being limitless in power and virtue and one's very brother; and though he says that he does not find such a Being in Christ, it is exactly what Christians have in all ages been finding. 'We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in times of need.'

III

The instance which we have cited is exceptional among modern doubters, among those who have deliberately set themselves without violent prejudice to study the claims of Christianity. Be it in poetry or prose, in scientific criticism or in imaginative

biography, with remarkable unanimity, while stubbornly refusing to accept the Creed of the Church, they so depict Him that the natural conclusion of their representation is, 'Oh, come let us adore Him.' There is scarcely any of them who would not sympathise with the admission and aspiration of R. Wimmer in his confession, *My Struggle for Light*: 'I cannot but love this unique Child of God with all the fervour of my soul, I cannot but lift up eyes full of reverence and rapture to this Personality in whom the highest and most sacred virtues which can move the heart of man shine forth in spotless purity throughout the ages. Even if many a trait in His portrait, as the Gospels sketch it for us, be more legendary than historical, yet I feel that here a man stands before me, a man who really lived and has a place in history like that of no other man: indeed I feel that even the legends concerning Him possess a truth in that they spring from the

Spirit which passed from Him into His Church. I know what I have to thank Him for. I would in my inmost self be so closely united with Him that He may live in my spirit and bear absolute sway in my soul. I will not be ashamed of His Cross and I will gladly endure the insults which men have directed, and still often enough direct, against Him and His truth.'

That is the characteristic and dominant note of the more recent criticism. The almost universal conclusion is that the Perfect Ideal has been depicted in the Christ of the Gospels, and has been depicted because the Reality had been seen in Jesus of Nazareth.[1] Is it not allowable to declare that the writers, let them say what they will about their rejection of the doctrine of the Church concerning the Incarnation and the Atonement of Christ, are practically His disciples, that the ardour of their faith in Him not infre-

[1] Appendix XXIV.

quently puts to shame the coldness of us who call Him Lord ?[1] There is scarcely extravagance in the assertion that, as we recognise the part which Strauss and Renan played, and the unconscious help which they rendered, 'we may well say now "*noster*" Strauss and "*noster*" Renan. They were, in their measure, and, according to their respective abilities, defenders of the Faith.'[2] While it is possible to lament that among Christian apologists there are timid surrenders and faithless forebodings, it is yet more possible to reply that 'Whereas our critics were at one time infidels and our bitter enemies, they are now proud of the name of Christian and ready to be the friends, as far as that is permitted, of every form of orthodoxy in Christianity.'[3]

The language in which, at any rate, they express their conception of Him is sometimes

[1] Appendix XXV.. [2] *Lux Hominum*, Preface.
[3] *Lux Hominum*, p. 84.

more devout, more exalted, than the language which used to be employed by professed apologists. The Hindu Theist, Protab Chandra Mozoomdar, who stood outside the fold of Christianity, joyfully proclaimed, 'Christ reigns. As the law of the spirit of heavenly life, He reigns in the bosom of every believer. . . . Christ reigns as the recogniser of Divine humanity in the fallen, the low, and the despicable, as the healer of the unhappy, the unclean, and the sore distressed. Reigns He not in the sweet humanity that goes forth to seek and to save its kin in every land and clime, to teach and preach, and raise and reclaim, to weep and watch and give repose? He reigns as sweet patience and sober reason amid the laws and orders of the world; as the spirit of submission and loyalty He reigns in peace in the kingdoms of the world. . . . Christ reigns in the individual who feebly watches His footprints in the tangled mazes of life.

He reigns in the community that is bound together in His name. As Divine Humanity, and the Son of God, He reigns gloriously around us in the New Dispensation.' [1]

Or listen to the rhapsody with which Mrs. Besant, once an Atheist, now a Theosophist, depicts His influence from age to age: 'His the steady inpouring of truth into every brain ready to receive it, so that hand stretched out to hand across the centuries and passed on the torch of knowledge, which thus was never extinguished. His the Form which stood beside the rack and in the flames of the burning pile, cheering His confessors and His martyrs, soothing the anguish of their pains and filling their hearts with His peace. His the impulse which spoke in the thunder of Savonarola, which guided the calm wisdom of Erasmus, which inspired the deep ethics of the God-intoxicated Spinoza. . . . His the beauty that allured Fra

[1] *The Oriental Christ.*

Angelico and Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci, that inspired the genius of Michael Angelo, that shone before the eyes of Murillo, and that gave the power that raised the marvels of the world, the Duomo of Milan, the San Marco of Venice, the Cathedral of Florence. His the melody that breathed in the Masses of Mozart, the sonatas of Beethoven, the oratorios of Handel, the fugues of Bach, the austere splendour of Brahms. Through the long centuries He has striven and laboured, and, with all the mighty burden of the Churches to carry, He has never left uncared for and unsolaced one human heart that cried to Him for help.' [1]

When we read sentences like these by themselves we say, Here is unqualified acceptance of the Christian Faith. And even when we are told that we must not take the sentences in their literal and natural meaning, that they apply not to Him Whose earthly

[1] *Esoteric Christianity.*

career is sketched in the Gospels, but to an Ideal Being evolved out of the writer's imagination, we are surely entitled to answer, It is of Jesus that the words are spoken, whether their meaning is to be taken literally or figuratively; if they have any meaning at all, they indicate a Being without a parallel. That there should be so extraordinary a conflict of opinion regarding Him, that the greatest intellects as well as the simplest souls should hail Him as Divine, that the most critical should still find their explanations insufficient to account for the impression which He made upon His contemporaries and continues to wield to this day, at least renders Him absolutely unique. Men may disbelieve a great deal; they cannot disbelieve that this Amazing Personality has a place in the heart of the world which no other has ever occupied. The alleged imaginary Ideal has had on earth only one approximate Embodiment. Nay, we are

forced to confess, without the actual Character disclosed from Nazareth to Calvary, the Ideal would never have been conceived.

IV

Robert Browning has described in his *Christmas Eve* a certain German professor lecturing upon the myth of Christ and the sources whence it is derivable. But as the listeners wait for the inference that faith in Him should henceforth be discarded, 'he bids us,' says the supposed narrator of the story, 'when we least expect it take back our faith':

> Go home and venerate the myth
> I thus have experimented with.
> This Man, continue to adore Him
> Rather than all who went before Him,
> And all who ever followed after.

This is a correct though humorous summary of much prevalent scepticism. While critics destroy with the one hand, they build up

with the other; while they seem intent on rooting out every remnant of trust in Christ, they frequently conclude by passionately beseeching us to make Him our Model and our King, our Pattern and our Guide. If there is anything which is calculated at once to arouse us who profess and call ourselves Christians and to make us ashamed, it is that the diligence with which His Example is followed, the earnestness with which His words are studied, by some whom we hold to have abandoned the Catholic Faith, throw into the shade the obedience, the love, the earnestness which prevail among ourselves. They who follow not with us are casting out devils in His name. It is with us, they are careful to say, and not with Him that they are waging war. They may dispute the incidents of His recorded Life: they may insist on reducing Him to the level of humanity, but they also insist that in so doing they act according to His Own

Mind, that they refuse, for the very love which they bear Him, to surround Him with a glory which He would have rejected. Devoid of the errors which have led astray His successors, exalted far above the wisest and the best of those who have spoken in His Name, it is the function of criticism to show Him in His fashion as He lived, to sweep away the falsehoods which have gathered round Him in the course of ages.[1]

We do not seek to read into the emotional language of such writers a significance which they would repudiate, but we are surely entitled to point out that in spite of themselves they are bringing their tribute of homage to the King of the Jews, the King of all mankind. They grant so much that, it seems to us, they must grant yet more. We, at any rate, cannot stop where they deem themselves obliged to stop. We must go further, we hear other voices swell the

[1] Appendix XXVI.

chorus of adoration, we have the witness not only of those who, in awe and wonderment have exclaimed, 'Truly this was a Son of God,' but we have the witness of those who from heartfelt conviction are able to say, 'The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.' And to them we humbly hope to be able to respond, 'Now we believe not because of the language of others, whether honest doubters or devout disciples, for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.'

'Restate our doctrines as we may,' to sum up all in the words of one who began his career as a teacher in the confidence that Jesus of Nazareth was merely a man, but whom closer study and deepening experience have brought to a fuller faith, 'reconstruct our theologies as we will, this age, like every age, beholds in Him the Way to God, the

Truth of God, the Life of God lived out among men: this age, like every age, has heard and responds to His call, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest": this age, like every age, finds access to the Father through the Son. These things no criticism can shake, these certainties no philosophy disprove, these facts no science dissolve away. He is the Religion which He taught: and while the race of man endures, men will turn to the crucified Son of Man, not with a grudging, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!" but with the joyful, grateful cry, "My Lord and my God."'[1]

V

He who was lifted up on the Cross is drawing all men to Himself, wise and unwise, friend and foe, devout and doubting, is ruling even where His authority is disavowed, is

[1] J. Warschauer, *The New Evangel.*

causing hearts to adore where intellects rebel. The patriotic English baron, Simon de Montfort, as he saw the Royal forces under Prince Edward come against him, was filled with admiration of their discipline and bearing. 'By the arm of S. James,' he cried, recalling with soldierly pride that to himself they owed in great measure their skill, 'they come on well: they learned that not of themselves, but of me.' The Church of Christ, when confronted with the benevolence, the integrity, the zeal of some who are arrayed against her, may naturally say, 'They live well indeed: they learned that not of themselves, but of me.' 'You are probably,' was the homely expostulation of Benjamin Franklin with Thomas Paine, 'you are probably indebted to Religion for the habits of virtue on which you so justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank amongst

our most distinguished authors. For among us,' continued Franklin satirically, 'it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a youth, to be raised into the company of men, should prove his manhood by beating his mother.' The blows inflicted on Christianity come from unfilial hands and hearts, from hands and hearts which have been strengthened and nurtured on Christianity itself, from hands and hearts which, but for the lingering Christianity that still impels them, would soon be paralysed and dead. The ideals which systems intended to supersede Christianity set before them are, to all intents and purposes, only Christianity under another name. Where the ideals go beyond ordinary Christian practice, they are only a nearer approximation to the Supreme Ideal which has never been fulfilled save in Jesus Christ Himself. Wherever there is truth in them which is not generally accepted, or which comes as a surprise, investigation

will show that it is an aspect of Christianity which Christians have been neglecting, that it is a manifestation of the mind of Christ, a development of His principles. Look where we will, the men that are making real moral and spiritual progress are those who are in touch with Him. Their beliefs about Him may not be accurate, their conception of His nature and work may be defective, but it is His Name, His Spirit, His Power, it is Himself that is the secret of their life. One part of His teaching has sunk into their hearts, one element of His character has mysteriously impressed them. They have touched the hem of His garment, the shadow of His Apostle passing by has glided over them, and they have been roused from weakness and death. 'He that was healed wist not Who it was, for Jesus had conveyed Himself away.' So it happened in the days of His flesh: so is it happening still: they that are set free may not yet know to Whom

their freedom is to be ascribed. Now, as on the way to Emmaus, when men are communing together and reasoning, Jesus Himself may be walking with them, though their eyes are holden that they do not know Him. John Stuart Mill, whose acute intellect, whose spotless rectitude, whose public spirit, whose non-religious training naturally made him the idol of those to whom Christianity was a bygone superstition, came in his later days, not indeed to accept the orthodox creed, but yet to stretch out his longing hand to Christ, believing that He might have 'unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue.' George Eliot, whose genius was ever labouring to fill up the void which the rejection of her early faith had made, consoled her dying hours, as she had inspired her most ennobling pages, with the *Imitation of Christ.* Matthew Arnold, most cultured of critics, joins hands with the most fervid of evangelists in maintaining that

'there is no way to righteousness but the way of Jesus.' The name of Christ—none other name under heaven given among men will ever prove a substitute for that.

Renouncing faith in Christ, is there life, is there salvation for man to be found in the doctrines, the names, the influences which are so vehemently extolled? Is there one of them which so satisfies the cravings of the heart, which enkindles such glorious hopes, which inspires to such holy living, which inculcates so universal a brotherhood, as Christianity? Is there one of them which, at the best, is more than a keeping of despair at bay, than a resolute acceptance of utter overthrow, than a blindness to the tremendous issues which are involved?[1] Will the culture which is devoted, and cannot but be devoted, exclusively to the outward, which imparts a knowledge of Science or Art or Literature, be found sufficient to

[1] Appendix XXVII.

rescue men from the slavery of sin or from the torment of doubt? Will the progress which is altogether occupied with the material and the physical, with providing better houses and better food and better wages, produce happiness without alloy and remove the sting and dread of death?[1] Will the reiteration of the dogma that we are but fleeting shadows, that there is nothing to hope for in the future, that we are all the victims of delusion, tend to elevate and benefit our downcast race? Will the attempt to worship what has never been made known, what is simply darkness and mystery, be more successful in raising men above themselves than the worship of the Righteousness and the Love which have been made manifest in Christ? Will the attempt to supplant the worship of Jesus Christ, in Whom was no sin, by the worship of Humanity at large, of Humanity stained with guilt and crime as

[1] Appendix XXVIII.

well as illumined here and there with deeds of heroism, of Humanity sunk to the level of the brutes as well as exalted to the level of whatever we may suppose to be the highest, seeing that there is really no higher existence with which to compare it—will this worship of itself, with all its baseness and imperfection, this turning of mankind into a Mutual Adoration Society, make Humanity divine? Will even the assurance that far-distant ages will have new inventions, fairer laws, more abundant wealth be any deliverance to us from our burdens, any salvation from our individual sorrow and guilt and shame? Can we to whom the likeness of Christ has been shown, can we imagine that any of these efforts to answer the yearning of mankind for deliverance from the body of this death will prove an efficient substitute for Him? And if we forsake Him, it must be in one or other of these directions that we go.

VI

But the signs of the times are full of hope. In social work at home, in the progress of missions abroad, in revivals of one kind and another, in growing reverence for holy things, in a renewed interest in religion as the most vital of all topics, even in strange spiritual manifestations not within the Church, we have, amid all that is discouraging and depressing, indication of the coming kingdom. The cry, 'Back to Christ,' with all the truth that is in it, is only half a truth if it does not also mean 'Forward to Christ.' He is before us as well as behind us, and the Hope of the World is the gathering together of all things in Him. Should there be, as there has been over and over again in days gone by, a widespread unbelief, a rejection of His Divine Revelation, of this we may be sure—it will be only for a time. When the sceptical physician, in Tennyson's poem, murmured:

'The good Lord Jesus has had his day,'

the believing nurse made the comment:

> 'Had? has it come? It has only dawned: it will come by and by.'

A thought most sad, though most inspiring. 'Only dawned.' Why is Christianity after all these centuries only beginning to be manifested? It is at least partly because of the apathy, the divisions, the evil lives of us who profess and call ourselves Christians, because we have wrangled about the secondary and the comparatively unimportant, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, because we have so left to those beyond the Church the duty of proclaiming and enforcing principles which our Lord and His Apostles put in the forefront of their teaching. We have narrowed the Kingdom of Christ, we have claimed too little for Him, we have forgotten that He has to do with the secular as well as with the spiritual, that He must be King of the Nation as well as of the Church. But now in the growing

prominence of Social Questions, which so many fear as an evidence of the waning of religion, have we not an incentive to show that the social must be pervaded by the religious, that our duties to one another are no small part of the Kingdom of Christ? For all sorts and conditions of men, for masters and servants, for rulers and ruled, for employers and employed, there is ever accumulating proof that only as they bear themselves towards each other in the spirit of the New Testament can there be true harmony and mutual respect; that only, in short, as the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ will men in reality bear one another's burdens; that only as the Everlasting Gospel of the Everlasting Love prevails will all strife and contention, whether personal or political or ecclesiastical or national, come to an end; that only as men enter into the fellowship of that Son of Man Who came not to be

ministered unto but to minister and to give His Life a ransom for many will the glorious vision of old be fulfilled: I saw in the night vision, and behold One like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the Ancient of Days and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages shall serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

'I HOPE no reader imagines me so weak to stand up in defence of real Christianity such as used in primitive times (if we may believe the authors of those ages) to have an influence upon men's beliefs and actions. To offer at the restoring of that would indeed be a wild project: it would be to dig up foundations: to destroy at one blow all the wit and half the learning of the kingdom, to break the entire frame and constitution of things, to ruin trade, extinguish arts and sciences, with the professors of them; in short, to turn our courts, exchanges, and shops into deserts; and would be full as absurd as the proposal of Horace, where he advises the Romans all in a body, to leave their city, and seek a new seat in some remote part of the world, by way of cure for the corruption of their manners.'—DEAN SWIFT, *An Argument to Prove that the Abolishing of Christianity in England may, as things now stand, be attended with some Inconveniences.*

APPENDIX II

'While the state of our race is such as to need all our mutual devotedness, all our aspiration, all our resources of courage, hope, faith, and good cheer, the disciples of the Christian Creed and Morality are called upon, day by day, to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling and so forth. Such exhortations are too low for even the wavering mood and quacked morality of a time of theological suspense and uncertainty. In the extinction of that suspense and the discrediting of that selfish quacking I see the prospect for future generations of a purer and loftier virtue, and a truer and sweeter heroism than divines who preach such self-seeking can conceive of.'—Harriet Martineau, *Autobiography*, vol. ii. p. 461.

'Noble morality is classic morality, the morality of Greece, of Rome, of Renaissance Italy, of ancient India. But Christian morality is slave morality *in excelsis*. For the essence of Christian morality is the desire of the individual to be saved: his consciousness of power is so small that he lives in hourly peril of damnation and death and yearns thus for the arms of some saving grace.'—*F. Nietzsche*, by A. R. Orage, p. 53.

'They [Christians] have never learnt to love, to think, to trust. They have been nursed and bred and swaddled and fed on fear. They are afraid of death: they are afraid of truth: they are afraid of human nature: they are afraid of God. . . . They deal in a poor kind of old wives' fables, of lackadaisical dreams, of discredited sorcery, and white magic, and call it religion and the holy of holies. They wander about in a sickly soil of intellectual moonshine, where they mistake the dense and sombre shadows for substances. They want to stop the clocks of time that it may never be day, and to hoodwink the eyes of the nations that they may lead the people as so many blind.'—ROBERT BLATCHFORD, *Clarion*, March 3, 1905.

APPENDIX III

'In Georgia, indeed, as the Jesuits had found it in South America, the vicinity of a white settlement would have proved the more formidable obstacle to the conversion of the Indian. When Tounchichi was urged to listen to the doctrines of Christianity, he keenly replied, "Why, there are Christians at Savannah! there are Christians at Frederica!" Nor was it without good apparent reason that the poor savage exclaimed, "Christian much drunk! Christian beat men! Christian tell lies! Devil Christian! Me no Christian!"'—Southey, *Life of John Wesley*, vol. i. p. 57.

'I was then carried in spirit to the mines where poor oppressed people were digging rich treasures for those called Christians, and heard them blaspheme the name of Christ, at which I was grieved, for to me His name was precious. I was then informed that these heathens were told that those who oppressed them were the followers of Christ, and they said among themselves, "If Christ directed them to use us in this sort, this Christ is a cruel tyrant."'—*Journal of John Woolman*, p. 264.

APPENDIX IV

'WHAT many upright and ardent souls have rejected is a misconception, a caricature, a subjective Christianity of their own, a traditional delusion, which no more resembles real Christianity than the conventional Christ of the painted church window resembles Jesus Christ of Nazareth. It is true that at this moment the great majority of the people of this country never go to any place of worship, and this is yet more the case on the Continent of Europe. Does it in the least degree indicate that the masses of the European nations have weighed Christianity in the balance and found it wanting? Nothing of the sort. The overwhelming majority of them have not the faintest conception of what Christianity is. I myself have met a great number of so-called "Agnostics" and "Atheists" in our universities, among our working-men, and in society, but I have never yet met one who had rejected the Christianity of Christ.'—HUGH PRICE HUGHES, Preface to *Ethical Christianity*.

APPENDIX V

'WHERESOEVER Christianity has breathed it has accelerated the movement of humanity. It has quickened the pulses of life, it has stimulated the incentives of thought, it has turned the passions into peace, it has warmed the heart into brotherhood, it has fanned the imagination into genius, it has freshened the soul into purity. The progress of Christian Europe has been the progress of mind over matter. It has been the progrees of intellect over force, of political right over arbitrary power, of human liberty over the chains of slavery, of moral law over social corruption, of order over anarchy, of enlightenment over ignorance, of life over death. As we survey this spectacle of the past, we are impressed that this study of history is the strongest evidence for God. We hear no argument from design but we feel the breath of the Designer. We see the universal life moulding the individual lives, the one Will dominating many wills, the Infinite Wisdom utilising the finite folly, the changeless truth permeating the restless error, the boundless beneficence bringing blessing out of all. . . . And what shall we say of the future? . . . Ours is a position in some respects analogous to that of the mediæval world: the landmarks of the past are fading, the lights in the future are but dimly seen. Yet it is the study of the landmarks that helps us to wait for the light, and our highest hope is born of memory. In the view

of that retrospect, we cannot long despair. We may have moments of heart-sickness when we look exclusively at the present hour: we may have times of despondency when we measure only what the eye can see. But looking on the accumulated results of bygone ages as they lie open to the gaze of history, the scientific conclusion at which we must arrive is this, that the course of Christianity shall be, or has been, the path of a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day.'—G. MATHESON, *Growth of the Spirit of Christianity* (chap. xxxviii., 'Dawn of a New Day').

APPENDIX VI

'SHADOWS and figments as they appear to us to be in themselves, these attempts to provide a substitute for Religion are of the highest importance, as showing that men of great powers of mind, who have thoroughly broken loose not only from Christianity but from natural Religion, and in some cases placed themselves in violent antagonism to both, are still unable to divest themselves of the religious sentiment or to appease its craving for satisfaction.

'That the leaders of the anti-theological movement at the present day are immoral, nobody but the most besotted fanatic would insinuate: no candid antagonist would deny that some of them are in every respect the very best of men. . . . But what is to prevent the withdrawal of the traditional sanction from producing its natural effect upon the morality of the mass of mankind? . . . Rate the practical effect of religious beliefs as low and that of social influences as high as you may, there can surely be no doubt that morality has received some support from the authority of an inward monitor regarded as the voice of God. . . .

'The denial of the existence of God and of a future state, in a word, is the dethronement of Conscience: and society will pass, to say the least, through a dangerous interval, before social conscience can fill the vacant throne.'—GOLDWIN SMITH, 'Proposed Substitutes for Religion,' *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. xxxvii.

APPENDIX VII

'It no less *takes two* to deliver the game of Duty from trivial pretence and give it an earnest interest. How can I look up to myself as the higher that reproaches me? issue commands to myself which I dare not disobey? ask forgiveness from myself for sins which myself has committed? surrender to myself with a martyr's sacrifice? and so through all the drama of moral conflict and enthusiasm betweem myself in a mask and myself in *propria persona*? How far are these semblances, these battles in the clouds, to carry their mimicry of reality? Are we to *worship* the self-ideality? to *pray* to an empty image in the air? to trust in sorrow a creature of thought which is but a phenomenon of sorrow? No, if religious communion is reduced to a monologue, its essence is extinct and its soul is gone. It is a living relation, or it is nothing: a response to the Supreme Reality. And vainly will you search for your spiritual dynamics without the Rock Eternal for your πού στῶ;'—James Martineau, Essays iv. 282, *Ideal Substitutes for God.*

APPENDIX VIII

'It is an awful hour—let him who has passed through it say how awful—when life has lost its meaning and seems shrivelled into a span—when the grave appears to be the end of all, human goodness nothing but a name, and the sky above this universe a dead expanse, black with the void from which God himself has disappeared. In that fearful loneliness of spirit . . . I know but one way in which a man may come forth from his agony scathless: it is by holding fast to those things which are certain still—the grand, simple landmarks of morality.

'In the darkest hour through which a human soul can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God and no future state yet even then it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than false, better to be brave than to be a coward. Blessed beyond all earthly blessedness is the man who, in the tempestuous darkness of the soul, has dared to hold fast to these venerable landmarks. Thrice blessed is he who, when all is drear and cheerless within and without, when his teachers terrify him and his friends shrink from him, has obstinately clung to moral good. Thrice blessed, because his night shall pass into clear bright day.'—F. W. Robertson, *Lectures, Addresses, etc.*, p. 49.

APPENDIX IX

'LET me say at once that if after the elimination of all untruths from Christianity, we could build a belief in God and Immortality on the residue, we should then have a far more powerful incentive to right conduct than anything that I am about to urge.'—PHILIP VIVIAN, *Churches and Modern Thought*, p. 323.

APPENDIX X

'WITHOUT prejudice, what would be the effect upon modern civilisation if the Divine Ideal should vanish from modern thought?

'It would be presumptuous to attempt a description, rather because it is so hard to picture ourselves and our outlook deprived of what we have held during thousands of generations, our very *raison d'être*, than because we cannot calculate at least a part of what would have to happen. Without pretending to undertake that exercise, it may not be too bold to conclude definitely, what has been suggested argumentatively throughout: namely, that moral goodness, as we trace it in the past, as we enjoy it in the present, as we reckon upon it in the future, would be found undesirable and therefore impracticable. A new "morality" would doubtless take its place and set up a new ideal of goodness; but the former would no more represent the elements we so far call moral than the latter would embody the conceptions we now call good: the more logically the inevitable system were followed up, the more progressively would moral inversion be realised.

'It does not seem credible that the new morality could escape being egoistic and hedonistic, and these principles alone would dictate complete reversal of all our present notions as to what is noble, what is useful, what is good. An egoist hedonism that should not be selfish and sensual is a fond

superstition; it would have to be both and frankly. All the prophylactic expedients whereby a reciprocal egoism must safeguard its sensuous rights would certainly be there; and they represent in spirit and in practice whatever we have learned to consider execrable. We do not require Professor Haeckel[1] to inform us, with the triumphal rhetoric that accompanies a grand new discovery, of the prudential homicide which is to confer a supreme blessing upon humanity, for it has raged throughout antiquity, and still stalks abroad in daylight wherever the kingdom of men is not also the kingdom of Christ. Ten minutes' thought is sufficient to convince any rational man or woman what must inevitably follow in a world of animal rationalism, where no souls are immortal, where the human will is the supreme will and there is eternal peace in the grave. It could scarcely transpire otherwise than that "euthanasia" should replace care of the chronic sick and indigent aged; that infanticide should be in a large category of circumstances encouraged, and in some compelled; that suicide should offer a rational escape from all serious ills, leaving a door ever hospitably ajar to receive the body bankrupt in its capacity for sensual enjoyment, the only enjoyment henceforth worthy of the name. These are the "virtues" under the new morality; there are other things of which it were not well to speak. Imagination turns its back. In a world that has never been without its gods, among human creatures who have never existed without a conscience, deeds have been done and horrors have been practised through centuries, through ages, that make annals read like ogre-tales and books of travels like the works of morbid novelists; and the worst always goes unrecorded. What then ought we to anticipate for a world yielding obedience to nothing loftier

[1] See *The Wonders of Life*, chap. v., popular translation, and other works.

than the human intellect, seeking no prize obtainable outside the individual life time, logically incapable of any gratification outside the individual body, convinced of nothing save eternal oblivion in the ever-nearing and inevitable grave, and reposed on the calm assurance that "goodness" and "badness," "virtue" and "vice" (whatever these terms may then correspond to) are recompensed, indifferently, by nothing better and nothing worse than physical animal death?'—JASPER B. HUNT, B.D., *Good without God: Is it Possible?* p. 51.

APPENDIX XI

'When we say that God is personal, we do not mean that He is localised by mutually related organs; that He is hampered by the physical conditions of human personality. We mean that He is conscious of distinctness from all other beings, of moral relation to all living things, and of power to control both from without and from within the action of every atom and of every world. This is what we mean by personality in God. It is not a materialistic idea. It is essentially spiritual. It is a breakwater against the destruction of the very thought of God, or the submersion of it in the mere processes of eternal evolution. There is a Pantheism which obliterates every trace of Divine personality, which takes from God consciousness, will, affection, emotion, desire, presiding and over-ruling intelligence. But such Pantheism is better known as Atheism. It destroys the only God who can be a refuge and a strength in time of trouble. It annihilates that mighty conscience which drives the workers of iniquity into darkness and the shadow of death, if possible, to hide themselves. It closes the Divine Ear against the prayer of faith. It abolishes all sympathy, all communion between the Father and the children. It makes God not the world's life, but the world's grave. Therefore, against all such Pantheism our being revolts.'—Peter S. Menzies, *Sermons* ('Christian Pantheism').

APPENDIX XII

'THERE is an Old Testament Pantheism speaking unmistakably out of the lips of the Prophets and the Psalmists, . . so interwoven with their deepest thoughts of God, that any hesitation to receive it would have been traced by them most probably to purely heathen conditions of thought, which ascribes to every divinity a limited function, a separate home, and a restricted authority. . . . But undoubtedly the most unequivocal and outspoken Pantheist in the Bible is St. Paul. He speaks in that character to the Athenians, affirming all men to be the offspring of God, and, as if this were not a sufficiently close bond of affinity, adding, "In Him we live and move and have our being." His Pantheistic eschatology casts a radiance over the valley of the shadow of death, which makes the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians one of the most precious gifts of Divine inspiration which the holy volume contains. "And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all and all." Nor, if he had wished to administer a daring shock to the ultra-Calvinism of our own Confessional theology, could he have uttered a sentiment more hard to reconcile with any view of the Universe that is not Pantheistic than that contained in the 32nd verse of the present chapter: "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all." It

is quite clear in the face of all this Scripture evidence that there is a form of Pantheism which is not only innocent, defensible, justifiable, but which we are bound to teach as of the essence of all true theology. Nothing could be more childish than that blind horror of Pantheism which shudders back from it as the most poisonous form of rank infidelity.'—PETER S. MENZIES, *Sermons* ('Christian Pantheism').

APPENDIX XIII

'PANTHEISM gives noble expression to the truth of God's presence in all things, but it cannot satisfy the religious consciousness: it cannot give it escape from the limitations of the world, or guarantee personal immortality or (what is most important) give any adequate interpretation to sin, or supply any adequate remedy for it. . . . Christian theology is the harmony of Pantheism and Deism. On the one hand Christianity believes all that the Pantheist believes of God's presence in all things. "In Him," we believe, "we live and move and are; in Him all things have their coherence." All the beauty of the world, all its truths, all its goodness, are but so many modes under which God is manifested, of whose glory Nature is the veil, of whose word it is the expression, whose law and reason it embodies. But God is not exhausted in the world, nor dependent upon it: He exists eternally in His Triune Being, self-sufficing, self-subsistent. . . . God is not only in Nature as its life, but He transcends it as its Creator, its Lord—in its moral aspect—its Judge. So it is that Christianity enjoys the riches of Pantheism without its inherent weakness on the moral side, without making God dependent on the world, as the world is on God.'—BISHOP GORE, *The Incarnation of the Son of God*, p. 136.

APPENDIX XIV

'The Supreme Power on this petty earth can be nothing else but the Humanity, which, ever since fifty thousand—it may be one hundred and fifty thousand—years has slowly but inevitably conquered for itself the predominance of all living things on this earth, and the mastery of its material resources. It is the collective stream of Civilization, often baffled, constantly misled, grievously sinning against itself from time to time, but in the end victorious; winning certainly no heaven, no millennium of the saints, but gradually over great epochs rising to a better and a better world. This Humanity is not all the human beings that are or have been. It is a living, growing, and permanent Organism in itself, as Spencer and modern philosophy establish. It is the active stream of Human Civilization, from which many drop out into that oblivion and nullity which is the true and only Hell.'—F. Harrison, *Creed of a Lagman*, p. 72.

APPENDIX XV

Mr. Frederic Harrison's Creed 'is open to every objection which he so justly brings against what he regards as Mr. Spencer's Creed. These reasons are broad, common, and familiar. So far as I know they never have been, and I do not believe they ever will be, answered. The first objection is that Humanity with a capital H (Mr. Harrison's God) is neither better nor worse fitted to be a God than his Unknowable with a capital U. They are as much alike as six and half-a-dozen. Each is a barren abstraction to which any one an attach any meaning he likes. Humanity, as used by Mr. Harrison, is not an abstract name for those matters in which all human beings as such resemble each other, as, for instance, a human form and articulate speech. . . . Humanity is a general name for all human beings who, in various ways, have contributed to the improvement of the human race. The Positivist calendar which appropriates every day in the year for the commemoration of one or more of these benefactors of mankind is an attempt to give what a lawyer would call "further and better particulars" of the word. If this, or anything like this, be the meaning of Mr. Harrison's God, I must say that he, she, or it appears to me quite as ill-fitted for worship as the Unknowable. How can a man worship an indefinite number of dead people, most of whom are unknown to him even by name, and many of whose characters

were exceedingly faulty, besides which the facts as to their lives are most imperfectly known? How can he in any way combine these people into a single object of thought? An object of worship must surely have such a degree of unity that it is possible to think about it as distinct from other things, as much unity at least as the English nation, the Roman Catholic Church, the Great Western Railway. No doubt these are abstract terms, but they are concrete enough for practical purposes. Every one understands what is meant when it is asserted that the English nation is at war or at peace; that the Pope is the head of the Roman Catholic Church; that the Great Western Railway has declared a dividend; but what is Humanity? What can any one definitely assert or deny about it? How can any one meaning be affixed to the word so that one person can be said to use it properly and another to abuse it? It seems to me that it is as Unknowable as the Unknowable itself, and just as well, and just as ill, fitted to be an object of worship.'—Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, 'The Unknowable and Unknown,' *Nineteenth Century*, June 1884.

APPENDIX XVI

'Deism and Pantheism are both so irrational, so utterly inadequate to explain the simplest facts of our moral and spiritual life that neither of them can long hold mankind together. Positivism, which has made a systematic and memorable attempt to fill the gap, itself bears witness to the craving of human nature for some stronger bond than such systems can supply; while its appreciation of the necessity of Religion gives it an importance not possessed by mere Agnosticism. Yet it is impossible to look at an encyclopædic attempt to grasp all knowledge and all history, such as that made by the founder of Positivism, without a deep, oppressive sadness. . . .

'Can men heap fact upon fact and connect science with science in a splendid hierarchy and find no better end than this? Is such a review to come to this, that we must worship either actual humanity with all its meanness and wickedness, or ideal humanity which does not yet exist, and, if this world is all in all, may never come into being? . . . For ideal humanity, however moral and enlightened, if unaided by God, as the Posivitist holds, is still earth-bound and sense-bound. . . . We are told that it is common sense to recognise that much is beyond us. Perfectly true. But it is not common sense to worship an ignorant and weak humanity which certainly made nothing, and has in itself no assurance

of continuance in the future, nay rather, a very clear probability of destruction, if simply left to itself.

'What Positivism surely needs to give it hope and consistency is the doctrine of the Logos, of the Eternal Word and Reason, the Creator, Orderer, and Sustainer of all things, Who has taken a stainless human nature that He might make men capable of all knowledge. This Divine Humanity of the Logos, drawing mankind into Himself, is indeed worthy of all worship. In loving Him, we learn really what it is to "live for others." In looking to Him we cease from selfishness and pride. Such a worship of humanity is not a mere baseless hope, but a reality appearing in the very midst of history, a reality apprehended by Faith indeed, but by a Faith always proving itself to those, and by those, who hold it fast in Love. There is room, then, ample room, and a loud demand for the re-establishment of a Christian Philosophy based upon the Incarnation.'—JOHN WORDSWORTH (Bishop of Salisbury), *The One Religion*, pp. 307-309.

APPENDIX XVII

The invariable laws under which Humanity is placed have received various names at different periods. Destiny, Fate, Necessity, Heaven, Providence, all are so many names of one and the same conception: the laws which man feels himself under, and that without the power of escaping from them. We claim no exemption from the common lot. We only wish to draw out into consciousness the instinctive acceptance of the race, and to modify the spirit in which we regard them. We accept: so have all men. We obey: so have all men. We venerate: so have some in past ages or in other countries. We add but one other term—we love. We would perfect our submission and so reap the full benefits of submission in the improvement of our hearts and tempers. We take in conception the sum of the conditions of existence, and we give them an ideal being and a definite home in space, the second great creation which completes the central one of Humanity. In the bosom of space we place the world, and we conceive of the world and this our Mother Earth as gladly welcomed to that bosom with the simplest and purest love, and we give our love in return.

> Thou art folded, thou art lying
> In the light which is undying.

'Thus we complete the Trinity of our religion, Humanity, the World, and Space. So completed we recognise power to

give unity and definiteness to our thoughts, purity and warmth to our affections, scope and vigour to our activity. We recognise its powers to regulate our whole being, to give us that which it has so long been the aim of all religion to give—internal union. We recognise its power to raise us above ourselves and by intensifying the action of our unselfish instincts to bear down unto their due subordination our selfishness. We see in it yet unworked treasures. We count not ourselves to have apprehended but we press forward to the prize of our high calling. But even now whilst its full capabilities are unknown to us, before we have apprehended, we find enough in it to guide and strengthen us.'—'*The New Religion in its Attitude towards the Old:* A Sermon preached at South Field, Wandsworth, Wednesday, 19th Moses 71 (19th January 1859), on the anniversary of the birth of Auguste Comte, 19th January 1798, by RICHARD CONGREVE.' J. Chapman: 8 King William Street, Strand, London.

APPENDIX XVIII

We have compared Positivism where it is thought to be strongest with Christianity where it is thought to be weakest. And if the result of the comparison even then has been unfavourable to Positivism, how will the account stand if every element in Christianity be taken into consideration? The religion of humanity seems specially fitted to meet the tastes of that comparatively small and prosperous class who are unwilling to leave the dry bones of Agnosticism wholly unclothed with any living tissue of religious emotion, and who are at the same time fortunate enough to be able to persuade themselves that they are contributing, or may contribute, by their individual efforts to the attainment of some great ideal for mankind. But what has it to say to the more obscure multitude who are absorbed, and wellnigh overwhelmed, in the constant struggle with daily needs and narrow cares, who have but little leisure or inclination to consider the precise rôle they are called on to play in the great drama of "humanity," and who might in any case be puzzled to discover its interest or its importance? Can it assure them that there is no human being so insignificant as not to be of infinite worth in the eyes of Him Who created the Heavens, or so feeble but that his action may have consequence of infinite moment long after this material system shall have crumbled into nothingness? Does it offer consolation to those who are in grief, hope to those who

are bereaved, strength to the weak, forgiveness to the sinful, rest to those who are weary and heavy laden? If not, then whatever be its merits, it is no rival to Christianity. It cannot penetrate or vivify the inmost life of ordinary humanity. There is in it no nourishment for ordinary human souls, no comfort for ordinary human sorrow, no help for ordinary human weakness. Not less than the crudest irreligion does it leave us men divorced from all communion with God, face to face with the unthinking energies of Nature which gave us birth, and into which, if supernatural religion be indeed a dream, we must after a few fruitless struggles be again resolved.'—RIGHT HON. ARTHUR J. BALFOUR, *The Religion of Humanity.*

APPENDIX XIX

'TRULY if Humanity has no higher prospects than those which await it from the service of its modern worshippers its prospects are dark indeed. Its "normal state" is a vague and distant future. But better things may yet be hoped for when the true Light from Heaven shall enlighten every man, and the love of goodness shall everywhere come from the love of God, and nobleness of life from the perfect Example of the Lord.'—JOHN TULLOCH, D.D. LL.D., *Modern Theories in Philosophy and Religion*, p. 86.

APPENDIX XX

Mr. Frederic Harrison came under the influence of both the Newmans. 'John Henry Newman led me on to his brother Francis, whose beautiful nature and subtle intelligence I now began to value. His *Phases of Faith*, *The Soul*, *The Hebrew Monarchy* deeply impressed me. I was not prepared either to accept all this heterodoxy nor yet to reject it; and I patiently waited till an answer could be found.'—*The Creed of a Layman.*

APPENDIX XXI

Even Mr. Voysey admits the constraining power of the Cross:

'That is still the noblest, most sublime picture in the whole Bible, where the Christ is hanging on the Cross, and the tears and blood flow trickling down, and the last words heard from His lips are "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." That love and pity will for ever endure as the type and symbol of what is most Divine in the heart of man. Thank God! it has been repeated and repeated in the lives and deaths of millions besides the Christ of Calvary. But wherever found it still claims the admiration, and wins the homage of every human heart, and is the crowning glory of the human race. —C. Voysey, *Religion for All Mankind*, p. 105.

APPENDIX XXII

'Not only the Syrian superstition must be attacked, but also the belief in a personal God which engenders a slavish and oriental condition of the mind, and the belief in a posthumous reward which engenders a selfish and solitary condition of the heart. These beliefs are, therefore, injurious to human nature. They lower its dignity, they arrest its development, they isolate its affections. We shall not deny that many beautiful sentiments are often mingled with the faith in a personal Deity, and with the hopes of happiness in a future state; yet we maintain that, however refined they may appear, they are selfish at the core, and that if removed they will be replaced by sentiments of a nobler and purer kind.'—Winwood Reade, *Martyrdom of Man*, p. 543.

APPENDIX XXIII

'THERE is a servile deference paid, even by Christians, to incompetent judges of Christianity. They abjectly look to men of the world, to scholars, to statesmen, for testimonies to the everlasting and self-evidencing verities of heaven! And if they can gather up, from the writings or speeches of these men, some patronising notices of religion, some incidental compliment to the civilising influence of the Bible, or to the aesthetic proprieties of worship, or to the moral sublimity of the character or gospel of Christ, they forthwith proclaim these tributes as lending some great confirmation to the Truth of GOD! So we persist in asking, not "Is it true? true to our souls?" or, "Has the Lord said it?" but, "What say the learned men, the influential men, the eloquent men?" Shame upon these time-serving concessions, as unmanly as they are fallacious. Go back to the hovels, rather, and take the witnessing of the illiterate souls whose hearts, waiting there in poverty or pain, or under the shadow of some great affliction, the Lord Himself hath opened.'—F. D. HUNTINGDON, *Christian Believing and Living.*

APPENDIX XXIV

'It is foreign to our purpose to discuss the various theories which have been advanced to explain the genesis and power of the Christian Religion from the cynical Gibbon to the sentimental Renan and the Rationalist Strauss. One remark may be permitted. It has been our lot to read an immense amount of literature on this subject, and with no bias in the orthodox direction, we are bound to admit that no theory has yet appeared which from purely natural causes explains the remarkable life and marvellous influence of the Founder of Christianity.'—Hector Macpherson, *Books to Read and How to Read Them.*

APPENDIX XXV

THE Song of a Heathen Sojourning in Galilee, A.D. 32.

If Jesus Christ is a man,
And only a man, I say
That of all mankind I cleave to Him,
And to Him will I cleave alway.

If Jesus Christ is a God,
And the only God, I swear
I will follow Him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea, and the air!

RICHARD WATSON GILDER.

APPENDIX XXVI

'I DISTINGUISH absolutely between the character of Jesus and the character of Christianity—in other words between Jesus of Nazareth and Jesus the Christ. Shorn of all supernatural pretensions, Jesus emerges from the great mass of human beings as an almost perfect type of simplicity, veracity, and natural affection. "Love one another" was the Alpha and Omega of His teaching, and He carried out the precept through every hour of His too brief life. . . . But how blindly, how foolishly my critics have interpreted the inner spirit of my argument, how utterly have they failed to realise that the whole aim of the work is to justify Jesus against the folly, the cruelty, the infamy, the ignorance of the creed upbuilt upon His grave. I show in cipher, as it were, that those who crucified Him once would crucify Him again, were He to return amongst us. I imply that among the first to crucify Him would be the members of His Own Church. But nowhere surely do I imply that His soul, in its purely personal elements, in its tender and sympathising humanity was not the very divinest that ever wore earth about it.'—ROBERT BUCHANAN in Letter of January 1892 to *Daily Chronicle* regarding his poem *The Wandering Jew*. *Robert Buchanan: His Life, Life's Work, and Life's Friendships*, by Harriett Jay, pp. 274-5.

APPENDIX XXVII

'I do not believe I have any personal immortality. I am part of an immortality perhaps, but that is different. I am not the continuing thing. I personally am experimental, incidental. I feel I have to do something, a number of things no one else could do, and then I am finished, and finished altogether. Then my substance returns to the common lot. I am a temporary enclosure for a temporary purpose: that served, and my skull and teeth, my idiosyncrasy and desire will disperse, I believe, like the timbers of the booth after a fair.'—H. G. Wells, *First and Last Things*, p. 80.

APPENDIX XXVIII

'THE estate of man upon this earth of ours may in course of time be vastly improved. So much seems to be promised by the recent achievements of Science, whose advance is in geometrical progression, each discovery giving birth to several more. Increase of health and extension of life by sanitary, dietetic, and gymnastic improvement; increase of wealth by invention and of leisure by the substitution of machinery for labour: more equal distribution of wealth with its comforts and refinements; diffusion of knowledge; political improvement; elevation of the domestic affections and social sentiments; unification of mankind and elimination of war through ascendency of reason over passion—all these things may be carried to an indefinite extent, and may produce what in comparison with the present estate of man would be a terrestrial paradise. Selection and the merciless struggle for existence may be in some measure superseded by selection of a more scientific and merciful kind. Death may be deprived at all events of its pangs. On the other hand, the horizon does not appear to be clear of cloud. . . . Let our fancy suppose the most chimerical of Utopias realised in a commonwealth of man. Mortal life prolonged to any conceivable extent is but a span. Still over every festal board in the community of terrestrial bliss will be cast the shadow of approaching death; and the sweeter life becomes the more bitter death will be.

The more bitter it will be at least to the ordinary man, and the number of philosophers like John Stuart Mill is small.'—GOLDWIN SMITH: *Guesses at the Riddle of Existence* ('Is There Another Life?').

'In return for all of which they have deprived us, some prophets of modern science are disposed to show us in the future a City of God *minus* God, a Paradise *minus* the Tree of Life, a Millennium with education to perfect the intellect, and sanitary improvements to emancipate the body from a long catalogue of evils. Sorrow no doubt will not be abolished; immortality will not be bestowed. But we shall have comfortable and perfectly drained houses to be wretched in. The news of our misfortunes, the tidings that turn the hair white, and break the strong man's heart will be conveyed to us from the ends of the earth by the agency of a telegraphic system without a flaw. The closing eye may cease to look to the land beyond the River; but in our last moments we shall be able to make a choice between patent furnaces for the cremation of our remains, and coffins of the most charming description for their preservation when desiccated.'—Archbishop ALEXANDER: *Witness of the Psalms to Christ and Christianity*, p. 48.

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